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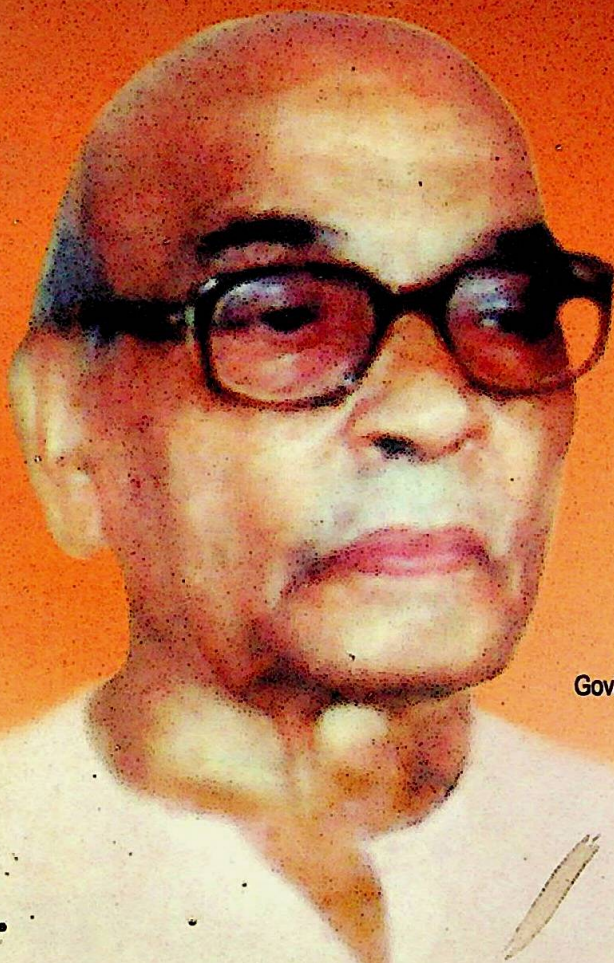
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Govind Vinayak Karandikar

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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

aa no bhadraah kratavo yantu vishvatah

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side -Rigveda, 1-89-1



Holy and Wise

Real Love

Real love always has, as its foundation, renunciation of individual happiness, and the affection towards all men which arises therefrom. Only upon this universal affection can spring up genuine love for certain people--one's own relatives or strangers. And such love alone gives the true bliss of life, and solves the apparent contradictions of the animal and the rational consciousness.

- Tolstoy

Alone But Powerful

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one,
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one,
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When its love is done.

- Francis W. Bourdillon

Savitri

Let our meditation be on the glorious light of Savitri.
May this light illumine our minds.

- Rig Veda

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March 31, 2006***In this Issue...***

◆ Holy and Wise	1
◆ Letter from the President Sri Rama and Swaminarayan	5
◆ Flash Back	8
◆ Editorial	11
Wanted, Justice for the Victim	
◆ Indian Customs, Traditions and Religions —K.P. Radhakrishna Menon	14
◆ Our Good Earth —R. P. Dwivedi	19
◆ Communal Harmony —B.M.Hegde	25
◆ Govind Vinayak Karandikar: Poet par Excellence —Veena Adige	31
◆ The Four Editions of Ramayana —N.R. Waradpande	37
◆ Bharata Charitam —Sudha Subramaniam	44
◆ Let Noble Thoughts Come to us from Every side —Swami Śūdarśaṇanda	51
◆ Humane Devotees of Hanuman —A.B. Sai Prasad	55
◆ Art, Religion and Science-II —Ramdas	59
◆ The Legend of Sakthan Thampuran —S. V. V. Raghavan	63
◆ Gutenberg is Alive —Shri Nath Sahai	67
◆ Unity of Mind for Unity of Mankind —R. K. Langar	71

◆ Dr Bach Flower Remedies of England-III —V. Krishnamurthy	75
◆ Music Therapy for Alzheimer Patients —T.V. Sairam	78
◆ Holistic and Healthy Living —A. Balakrishna	82
◆ Swadhyaya Valmiki Ramayana	86
◆ Once Upon a Time-By God's Anger —Mangalam Ramaswami	88
◆ State's Primary Task —T. D. Jagadesan	91
◆ World of Books Magisterial But Incomplete —Devdatt P.Dubhashi	95
◆ Readers' Write	103
◆ Shraddhanjali	105
◆ Women's Section Chetana	107
◆ Children's Section Nandana	113
◆ Bhavan's News	119

Our Cover

39th Jnanpith Award Winner
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Letter from the President **Sri Rama and Swaminarayan**

From the ancient times of the dim and misty past, the spiritual fabric of India has, as its warp and weft, the immortal epics, the *Itihasas* of Ramayana and Mahabharata.

The Divine Incarnations of Lord Vishnu around whom these epics have been shaped, as Lord Sri Rama and Lord Sri Krishna, have impacted upon the lives of people of not only India but also many other countries of the world.

Lord Sri Rama is believed to have incarnated as the eldest son of King Dasaratha and his senior consort Kousalya, on the 9th day of the bright half of the month of Chaitra and this day is celebrated with piety and reverence, as Sri Rama Navami. This year, Sri Rama Navami falls on 6th April.

Ramayana is the fountain



source of a great tradition of literature, culture and religion. Few works of literature produced in any place and at any time have been as popular, influential, imitated and successful as the great Sanskrit epic poem, the

Ramayana. Though India is the land of origin of Ramayana it now belongs to the entire world and is a unique, social, cultural, spiritual, philosophical and literary treasure of the entire mankind.

Apart from India, in the South Eastern Asian region

Ramayana has made a tremendous impact in the countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Java, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

Bhagvan Sri Swaminarayan, who founded the Swaminarayan Sampradaya, was also born on Sukla Navami of the month of Chaitra in Samvat 1837, in the rustic village of Chapaiya, to a sarvaria Brahmin pandit whose name was Hariprasad Pande.

He was the second of three sons; Rampratap was the elder brother and Ichharam the younger. His mother was Premvati. She was reverentially referred to as Bhaktimata while



Akshardham Temple, New Delhi

his father was referred to as Dharmadev. The Swaminarayan Sampradaya consists of Vaishnavites. Sri Swaminarayan was followed by his successors Gunatitanand Swami Praghji Bhakta (Bhagatji Maharaj), Shastri Yagnapurushdas (Shastriji Maharaj), Sadhu Gnanjivandas (Yogiji Maharaj) and currently, Shastri Narayanswarupdas (Pramukh Swami Maharaj).

Totally dedicated and ardent followers of the Sampradaya are spread over 45 countries of the world. The movement has 55,000 youth volunteers. Its 472,700 annual assemblies and 9

international cultural festivals draw nearly 34 million visitors. It has built 10 hospitals and 50 schools.

As part of their environment programme the followers have planted over one and a half million trees in 2170 villages. They have recharged 5475 wells in 338 villages and have implemented 497 rain harvesting projects.

Through their campaigns they have helped over 600,000 people to give up their addiction to tobacco, liquor and drugs. 300

remote tribal villages have been socially and morally transformed.

The followers have built 600 mandirs worldwide. There are over 700 dedicated sadhus to help, guide and enlighten the 150,000 pilgrims who visit the mandirs every day. An impressive achievement, by any count!

Pravinchandra V. Gandhi

(Pravinchandra V. Gandhi)

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

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From the Pages of Bhavan's
Journal issue dated
March 25, 1956

Ethics of Military Alliances

G. L. Mehta

In considering questions of security and competition in armaments, it is frequently asked whether "the other side" is sincere and trustworthy. The other side asks the same question. I shall not merely say that trust begets trust although this is a saying whose inner core of truth we frequently forget in our search for bigger and better arms. But in the world today, it is not so much a question of sincerity of one Power or another as of the conditions which determine their outlook and policies. *The balance of power has, indeed, become indistinguishable from the balance of terror.* The desire to maintain peace and resolve differences through negotiation and agreement might be considered as durable as the H-bomb itself. For, even if all the bombs are destroyed, knowledge about atomic power will continue. So long, therefore, as conditions of an atomic stalemate remain and so long as nuclear war is recognised to be a threat to humanity, Powers will desist from going to war for resolving their differences. It means that we all should seek to avoid by every possible and legitimate means hostilities of any kind and remove the causes of conflicts.

Acharya Narendra Deva

Sri Prakasa

Narendra Devaji's life can be studied in many facets. First of all, there is his sweet and winning personality. Despite his terrible asthma to which he was a life-long martyr, he maintained a poise

and equanimity that would be hard to surpass. Anyone who came in contact with him, began immediately to admire him and to love him. Simple and gracious, gentle and courteous, he was accessible to everyone at all times; and to everyone he would have something pleasant to say and some ready sympathy and assistance to give. He was full of wit and humour also and always enjoyed a quiet unconventional friendly chat. As a teacher, he was unsurpassed. He was at home alike in history of many lands; in philosophy of many ages; in literature of many languages. His main interest in life was politics; and he was a master of this as of everything else.

Holi

Holi is the spring-festival celebrated at the approach of the Spring season, during the ten days – at least three or four days – preceding the full-moon day in the month of Phalgun. Whatever may be the origin or significance of the festival it cannot be denied that it offers a good opportunity for an untrammelled spree and thus letting off steam. The Holi is no respecter of young, or old, plebeian or patrician, officer or servant. No one can take offence against the innocent sport. Is that not a great psychological gain to the hardworked man or woman? That is good enough justification for the celebration of this kind of festival.

God

If anyone considers all the evidence of life here and on the stars out there, and fails to come to the belief that a higher power directs all, it is because the mind with which he considers this evidence is already closed by bias or ill-balanced by emotion or upset by suffering or too extroverted by the body's senses or faulty in some other way. The world is not bereft of life and sense. It has both. There is within and behind every bit of it a directing Mind, a governing spiritual principle. This everywhere-present Principle of life and the creative cosmic power are one and the same – God.

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CHENNAI.**

Editorial

Wanted, Justice for the Victim

The murder of an aspiring model, doubling up as a liquor-serving bar girl in a high profile Delhi night club seven years ago, has brought out the worst and the most unjust in our legal system. What was

obvious to everyone as cold-blooded murder by an identifiable VIP progeny took several legal somersaults before coming to the predictable conclusion of the due process of law in the acquittal of



The accused being taken to court. Inset: Jessica Lal

all the accused persons. The case has provoked a sense of national outrage at the sheer callousness of every wing of the judicial process in helping the criminals go scot free.

Over the past seven years, the police seems to have worked overtime to present as weak a case for the prosecution as would make even the mildest punishment impossible. Witnesses turned hostile and evidences got tampered with, as if the entire aim of the trial was to declare the accused innocent.

Thanks to the high media coverage of the case and its aftermath, a retrial and a fresh prosecution have become possible. Simultaneously, the UPA government has taken cognisance of certain suggestions by Mrs. Sonia Gandhi to amend the law to provide protection for witnesses and for prevention of tampering of evidence.

A retrial and fresh prosecution coupled with the Sonia Gandhi proposals will amount to nothing more

than a response to the mood of the nation for the time being. The underlying fact is that the judicial system has proved itself incapable of punishing the rich and the powerful who may be guilty of the worst crimes in the statute.

There are any number of cases of celebrities, progenies of VIPs and the super rich criminals who have proved themselves capable of twisting the legal system in their favour and against justice. When the law takes its own course, the police do not catch the criminals, and if caught the criminals are not brought to trial; and if they are brought to trial, the prosecution and defence conspire to delay the proceedings and at the end, with disappearing witnesses and conflicting evidence, delivering justice becomes a mere compulsion to deliver a judgment.

Little wonder that only seven out every hundred accused in criminal cases get punished and these seven are also people from the poor and right-less sections of society.

The judicial malaise goes deeper. In our legal system, there is a place for the judge, for the lawyer, the police, the criminal and even the perjurer but there is no space at all for the victim. When the media asked the question: "Will Jessica Lal get justice?" they are already aware that justice cannot reach someone shot dead seven years ago. The only issue before the justice system is whether anyone could be found guilty and punished for that murder.

Sadly, even this form of adversarial justice is not available to most victims of crime. In the process, justice itself has become a victim of culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

There are many reasons why murder of justice is easier than deliverance of justice. The foremost reason is delay. Parkinson's second law says: "Delay is the deadliest form of denial".

The most prolific manifestation of denial of justice is in the form of delay. If justice

is not prompt, the quest for justice becomes infructuous.

The legal system of India has condemned itself by the sheer weight of pending cases before various courts now amounting to 36-million. India's jails are overcrowded not with convicted criminals but with under-trials facing miscellaneous charges waiting to be converted into trials.

Unless the judicial conscience of the nation stirs itself up and starts looking at the victims of law and of crime as the ultimate, and possibly the only, targets of justice and stop looking at evidence offered by perjuring witnesses and adjournment-seeking lawyers, there can be no speedy dispensation of justice.

The core of legal reforms lies in bringing the outdated concept of equality before law into judicial focus. The nation's higher judiciary has a duty to fix limits for itself on the grant of adjournments in cases and also to fix an outer limit for every trial to be concluded.

Indian Customs, Traditions and Religions

K. P. Radhakrishna Menon

*"This is the ancient land
where wisdom made its home
before it went into any other
country"*

- Swami Vivekananda

What is this wisdom?
The answer is very
simple. The Vedantic
knowledge which provides the
foundation for the Indian
customs, traditions and religion;
the philosophy meant for
humanity as a whole.

This vedantic philosophy was
made practical by Sri Krishna in
the Gita. If one lives with this
philosophy, human dignity,
human freedom, human equality,
spirit of service, capacity for
efficient team work, all would
become heightened in society.
The Indian tradition is rooted in
these qualities, and I am proud



Swami Vivekananda

to say that Mother India is a
nation "which has sheltered the
persecuted and refugees of all
religions and nations on the
earth".

Swami Vivekananda stated at

the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893, "We have gathered in our bosom the present remnant of the Israelites who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny".

This Vedantic philosophy, gives a very high status to Sanatana Dharma, the science of values. 'Dharma' provides the nucleus for the Indian culture and religion, which has this to tell humanity, "as the different streams having their sources in different places, all mingle their water in the sea, so, Oh! Lord, the different path which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee". This Dharma philosophy is treated by Vedanta as a link between the physical sciences and the science of spirituality. Vedanta calls this science of spirituality "*Adhyatma Vidya*".

As Swami Ranganathanandaji once said: "This (*Adhyatma Vidya*) is the birth right of all



Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj human beings; when this begins to manifest, the life of a human being, wherever he is and whatever be his religion, begins to be brightened by values like love, purity, compassion, truthfulness, tolerance and the spirit of service in place of such traits like selfishness, hatred, violence and exploitation."

Obedience to these unenforceable laws marks the tradition of this great land. This tolerance made the people of this country realise that love and truth are the basic concept of all religions on earth. That is why in the 'Gita', it is said, "whomsoever comes to me, through whatsoever

form, I reach him, all men are struggling through paths which, in the end, lead to me."

The concept "unity in diversity" has become the national ideology. This ideology practised along with yet another ideology 'sacrifice and service' helped the Indians to adjure sectarianism, bigotry and its horrible descendant fanaticism".

Passage of time seems to have made this philosophy less significant, and the result is the unrest seen in the world. To restore peace in the world, humanity shall try to lead the Vedantic life preached in the 'Gita'. This philosophy is preached by the Universal teacher, Sri Krishna, on the battlefield, for the benefit of humanity as a whole.

To explain the Gita philosophy as a whole is difficult. I shall deal with only the philosophy of work expounded by Gita. Work that is 'Karma' is the means to Abhyudaya, that is, material prosperity of the worker and *nishsreyasa*, that is, spiritual

growth and fulfillment.

Material prosperity helps a country to achieve the welfare state status. So many western countries and Japan in the east have accomplished the said status. Special mention needs to be made of Sweden, as that country, according to western writers is the 'welfare' state. People of these developed countries, however, are unhappy; nobody knows what exactly is the reason. This is an example of external welfare and internal emptiness.

Keeping this peculiar state of affairs in mind, some Americans have made a film 'Trouble in Paradise'. It depicts the situation where men and women are subordinate to prosperity, but not vice-versa, without which you will be struck by the evils of consumerism. This can be avoided if you can develop your spirituality along with the material prosperity. Human life then will be meaningful. We will be able to see men as brothers. The divinity in man will be experienced by you.

Such developments and

There is, therefore, no difference between man and man whether here, there or elsewhere, whether a Hindu, Muslim or Christian or belonging to any other religion.

outlook would help the world to avoid conflicts and live like members of the same family, which has been explained by the vedic philosophy as *Vasudhaiva Kudumbakam* and for the prosperity of which the unique Vedantic mantra 'Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu'.

There is a small verse in Svetasvatana Upanishad. This message rendered into English reads: "Listen to me, Oh! Children of immortality of the world. That means children of immortality everywhere". Swami Vivekananda explained this thus. "You are not children of sin. It is a sin to call a man so; it is a standing label on human nature. A human being is a child of immortality whether in India or outside, whether a Hindu, Muslim, Christian, atheist or

agnostic. Human beings are essentially the immortal 'Atman' which has no birth or death".

It is defined as 'That Thou Art'. There is, therefore, no difference between man and man whether here, there or elsewhere, whether a Hindu, Muslim or Christian or belonging to any other religion.

This philosophy is reflected in the philosophy preached by the Prophet, this forms part of the Sermon on Mount preached by Christ, which forms part of the Sanatana Dharma, which again forms part of the Quranic principles and philosophy.

This is the truth about all religions. Love and truth are the different facets of the Almighty. Surprisingly, the various facets of human values spread over the different religious scriptures find a place in the 'Gita', preaching the Sanatana Dharma embedded in the Vedas and the Upanishads.

In these days of consumerism, leading the humanity to sensory satisfaction, creating more troubles and problems, the growth of spirituality is a must. The wonderful approach Vedanta has

prescribed for human welfare is the formulation of all the possible human urges and aspirations into 4 categories which we call the four Purushartas: Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha.

Acquisition of sensory satisfaction (Kama) and wealth without the intervention of Dharma will become a danger to society. That is why, it is always said that all our actions shall be rooted in Dharma.

I am proud to say Mother India has propounded the concept of *Vasudhaiva*

Kutumbakam.

All are brothers and sisters and coined a mantra, *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* for the upliftment of humanity from the cess-pool of decadence and degradation into which it has fallen.

In conclusion: I would quote the prophetic words of Dr. Arnold Toynbee: "It is already becoming clear that a chapter which had a western beginning will have to have an Indian ending if it is not to end in the self-destruction of human race".

Write for

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Articles, short stories, poems and anecdotes are invited from our discerning readers. Word count should not exceed 900.

All contributions should be typed, double space. You may send us your contributions in a floppy along with a printout or you may email to brbhavan@bom7.vsnl.net. in

Writing should be lucid and non-technical. Kindly avoid quotations in Sanskrit in devnagari script; instead please give English translation with transliteration in English, if absolutely necessary.



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Our Good Earth

R. P. Dwivedi

Twenty second April is the Earth Day, a day to reflect upon the bounties of Mother Earth – the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat and a rich diversity of flora and fauna around us.

It is a universal holiday when we celebrate Nature's gifts and take a pledge to preserve the environment. The Earth is not just our home; it is our mother, nourisher, provider and protector. The day also reminds us of the pitiable condition of our planetary parent, its sad state of affairs and the travails we humans have wrought upon her.

Almost all ancient religions and cultures have revered and worshipped Earth. Since Vedic times, the sky and earth have been regarded as dual divinities

and referred to alternately as father and mother, male and female or as two sisters. They hold the order and protect the universe. In the Rig Veda, the sky and earth have been praised as the all-knowing father and mother, who swell up with food to nourish us. The songs of glory of the earth have been enshrined and immortalised in the world's first holy text Rig Veda in the form of "Prithvi Sukta."

Our Vedic scriptures and rituals are replete with the glory and celebration of the earth (bhu), the atmosphere (bhuvah) and the sky or heaven (swah). Our entire universe has been regarded as a product of five primary elements or *mahabhutas* which are earth, water, fire, air and space. Various gods and goddesses have been associated

We have our own form of "Earth Day" during "Pongal" when we thank Mother Nature and the Sun for the harvest by cooking rice, jaggery and milk and allowing it to boil over so that the land gets its first taste.

with them. Even today we have a tradition of performing Bhoomi Pujan (earth worship) before we begin any construction work or before tilling the land.

We have our own form of "Earth Day" during "Pongal" when we thank Mother Nature and the Sun for the harvest by cooking rice, jaggery and milk and allowing it to boil over so that the land gets its first taste.

The ancient Greeks worshipped earth as a mother goddess-GAIA. The sky (Dyaus) was an important god in Indo-European mythology and remained so in Greece in the figure of Zeus.

Whereas all religions of the world have stressed the sanctity

and pristine glory of the earth and its biosphere, we seem to have forgotten where we came from, how we evolved through ages and where does our joy and peace lie. Environmentalists rightly harp on our crying need to go back to Nature—her breathtaking grandeur, verdant green, azure blue skies, cascading water-falls, flowing rivers and majestic mountains.

We are so deeply engrossed in myriad materialistic pursuits that we turn a blind eye to the alluring sights and soothing sounds of Nature. Although we have sprung from Nature we have started treating her as a mere resource, a store-house of raw materials and minerals, and inert matter or a mere producer of food or even garbage dump.

This attitude has led to the commercialisation of values and steep fall in ethical norms and moral standards in society. Man has become a rapacious exploiter of all natural resources or bounties which make Earth our home and haven. Extremely selfish individualism coupled

with aggressive commercial pursuits has created a world view which is suicidal and may lead to human self-destruction. William Wordsworth bemoans human lot by exclaiming:

"The world is too much with us".

Little we see in Nature that is ours,

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

The sea that bears her bosom to the moon;

The winds that will be howling at all hours

And are up-gather'd now like sleeping flowers;

For this, for everything, we are out of tune

It moves us not."

Lamenting such a human predicament the poet craves for the beauty and bliss of Nature.

English Poet W. H. Davies, condemns man's callousness towards the beauty of Nature in his famous poem "Leisure".

"What is this life, if full of care!

We have no time to stand and stare".

Such contemptuous attitude of man towards Earth and fellow human beings has again been poetically denounced in a North American Conference on Christianity & Ecology as under:

"How much of Earth's atmosphere must we contaminate?

How many species must we abuse and extinguish?

How many people must we degrade

And kill with toxic wastes

Before we learn to love and respect our Creation.

Before we learn to love and respect our home.

The word 'Ecology'; was coined by a German Zoologist Ernst Haeckel, who applied the term 'OEKOLOGIE' to the "relation of the animal both to its organic as well as its inorganic environment". The word is derived from Greek OIKOS meaning household, home or place to live". Thus ecology deals with the organism and environment which includes both other organisms and physical surroundings. The relationships

between individuals, between population and between organism and other environment form ecological systems or ecosystem.

Modern ecology is based on the concept of the ecosystem, a functional unit consisting of interacting organisms and all aspects of environment in any specific area. It contains both the living (biotic) and non-living (abiotic) components. The major functional unit of ecosystem is the population. Ecology is a multi-disciplinary science. Ecology emerged in 1960s as one of the most popular and important aspects of life sciences. The most pressing problems of mankind – population explosion, food scarcities, environmental pollution and all other attendant sociological and political problems are mainly ecological.

Ecology was a sacred science for the Vedic man as is evident from mankind's primordial experience of being an offspring of mother Earth. In the Vedas the worship addressed to the Earth

is veneration of the highest value in the hierarchy of existence, for Earth is undoubtedly the first-born of being, the foundation or basis from which emerges all that exists and on which all things rest. The Earth being universal mother and dispenser of all good, it is a masochistic vice to harm her. Man being the predominant organism is inextricably tied to his environment. His health and physical well-being and the continued existence of his own environment depends on how he applies ecological principles for the solution of many urgent environmental problems.

Since all of us have to be pro-nature pro-human, we should understand that even the modern evolutionary theory has revealed that there exists inter-existence or inter-dependence between the natural world and human life. There exists inter-connectedness or as Joanna Macy puts it – "In the Cosmic canopy of Indra's Net, each of us, each jewel at each node of the net, reflects all the others and reflects the others reflecting back. Inter-existence

Actually the earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the Earth and all things in creation are closely connected to one another like the blood which unites one family.

implies that although we humans are autonomous beings yet we are an integral part of larger whole at the same time”.

Even the quantum theory has revealed that subatomic particles are not things but connections between things. In fact, there are countless nurturing bonds that connect us to the natural world.

This inextricable inter-connectedness has recently been stressed by two great contemporary thinkers- Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme. They have tried to build a new cosmovision through integrating evolutionary theory and the spirituality of inter-connectedness with the earth and the universe. The attempt at the integration of evolutionary theory with earth's spirituality in

a new teleological paradigm is praiseworthy, for it diverts our attention from exclusively worshipping Science and Technology at the cost of Nature. In principle Science and Technology may not be inherently wrong but they are being increasingly used to manipulate, abuse and exploit not only Nature but also our fellow beings.

Actually the earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the Earth and all things in creation are closely connected to one another like the blood which unites one family.

The fault of merciless exploitation of Nature therefore lies in our attitude, perspective and vision. Matters would not improve unless we change our attitude to Nature and our cosmovision for the enrichment of human life on earth.

At the root of the growing malaise of exploiting and destroying Nature for our pleasure lies our aggressive individualism, gross materialism and crass consumerism. Today,

the success or greatness of a man depends on the measure he can accumulate, acquire, sell or consume.

The ethical norm of—"Simple living and high thinking" has given way to "Luxurious living and royal thinking." The emergence of this self-centered commercial mindset has let loose in society a cut-throat competition for achieving the best and discarding the worst.

Today the world is seized with a grave ecological crisis. The ecological degradation stems from our gross misuse of earth and its myriad natural resources.

We have created a suicidal civilisational crisis by showing utter indifference to or even total disregard for mother Earth from which we have evolved and by polluting and violating its biosphere.

Let us then take a pledge to conserve and preserve our common natural heritage by cleaning and greening our neighbourhood, for a pure and green earth is undoubtedly the

best inheritance we can bequeath to our future generations. Let us awaken international concern about the adverse and even devastating effects of atmospheric pollution.

Let us hark back to the cosmic views of our inspiring Vedic invocation for peace and harmony on earth and in the entire universe:

*"May peace prevail in the sky
and airy space (atmosphere),
May peace prevail on earth
and in the waters,
May peace dwell in medicinal
plants and vegetation (all
herbs and trees),
May peace reign among
Earth's gods and in Brahman,
May peace permeate in all
and the entire universe,
By this invocation of Peace;
may peace bring peace
everywhere,
May everything for me be
peaceful,
May peace prevail
everywhere and may it grow
evermore.
Om. Peace; Peace; Peace.
(Atharva Veda)*

Communal Harmony

B. M. Hegde

"They gave each other a smile, with a future in it."

Ring Lardner.

Communal disharmony is a social disease. This should be probed into deeply to find etiologic factors and then we, as a society, should have the best management strategy possible with radical surgery when needed.

Quick fix methods like draconian laws would only be counter productive in the long run. Hatred begets hatred and does not cure the malady. Love might do that. Communal disharmony is a disease which originates in the minds of the perpetrators and their henchmen. Most of the time the "organisers" of the crime have some vested interest in the happenings.

Recently I had a taste of this soup. The well meaning Udipi District Superintendent of Police requested me to be a delegate for

the "so called" communal harmony meet held in the Vidhana Soudha, Bangalore.

I agreed. With great personal inconvenience and spending my hard earned money I reached the venue only to be sent from pillar to post to get to the hall. There was hardly any one even to give proper direction, leave alone a welcome smile. Later I realised my mistake. People who usually go to the Vidhana Soudha are past masters in the wheeling dealing trade and know their way through the maze.

The hall was packed with politicians and there were a few "thinkers" of Bangalore, as well. The media was there in good numbers as the VVIPs were all there. For the first ninety minutes the talks were about some new law that the Union Home

Ministry intends to enact to "contain" communal violence.

Apart from the usual political ministerial discourses, the other talks were mainly from lawyers from the four Southern States who were arguing about the minutiae of the sub clauses and their appropriateness et cetera.

No one ever touched even the fringe of the real problem-communal harmony. One leading politician was pontificating on the need to keep the various communities together. The irony was that this very gentleman survives on keeping the communities apart for his elections and power!

Politicians live on dividing society for power and how could they honestly strive for communal harmony? No politician in India could afford to sincerely eradicate communal disharmony as that is his/her rice bowl. The "rice bowl bias" is the one that sustains all materialistic thinking. Altruism is the first casualty in politics.

One only has to read the book *Animal Farm* by George Orwell

(Eric Blaire) to know the political tricks that politicians play to keep themselves in power in the so-called demo (no) cracy. It is nothing new to India, it is universal and ubiquitous.

Muslims and the followers of the Sanathana Dharma lived like brothers and sisters in India from the very beginning of this development up until the Meerut riot in 1857 AD. Thanks to a physician from Edinburgh in the service of the company, whose hobby was laying telegraph lines, the East India Company was lucky to get the news of the riot in time at their headquarters in Calcutta to quell the mutiny with their guns against the sword wielding 1000 Indian ones.

The British then realised, for the first time, that the two major communities in India lived like brothers. Of the 1000 soldiers there were 420 Muslims when the population of UP was just 1% Muslim. This was a rude shock to the East India Company.

They engineered methods to keep the two communities at loggerheads by brainwashing

prominent Muslim leaders at that time by offering them perks and favours. The British did the same to the other community leaders also. From this humble beginning the communal disharmony bug grew in strength and multiplied to ultimately divide Mother India into two parts which later became three, thanks to the British again who saw that they handed over power only to divided India so that the people of the subcontinent could fight and get themselves destroyed. In addition the British could have a steady market for their arms factories also.

Most of our post independence rulers were British trained and they could understand the tricks of the trade to keep themselves in power.

Come elections, one could hear the sermons from the pulpit from every one of those crafty

politicians about communal harmony etc. Immediately after that they take communal statistics to decide the candidates for each constituency based not only on religion and caste but even on the sub-castes. Politicians live on communal disharmony and the resultant hatred and they were the ones talking about communal harmony in Bangalore the other day. They talk about poverty alleviation but try hard to keep the poor poorer to be able to create some new slogan for the next election.

Society should take the responsibility of keeping communal harmony. No outside agency, even the government, will be able to help. Self help is the best help. Having understood the pathology of communal disharmony we have to plan a long term strategy.

Hatred begets hatred and does not cure the malady. Love might do that. Communal disharmony is a disease which originates in the minds of the perpetrators and their henchmen. Most of the time the "organisers" of the crime have some vested interest in the happenings.

Progress comes only from those who look beyond their nose tip. Our primary aim should be to teach our children the beauty of universal brotherhood and we should try and widen our horizon to treat all mankind as one large family-citizens of this world.

Child's education starts at home long before he even goes to school. Children learn not by our preaching but our example. All parents should be living examples of all that is good in society for the children to get converted early in life. Schools should continue this tradition. We will then have brought up a whole new generation that would abhor communal, or for that matter, any violence in any form.

Each locality should have a "family group" of individuals of all religions, castes and communities to look after the needs of that locality. Any sign of misunderstanding should be examined honestly to come up with a suitable solution in the locality itself, nipping any fissiparous tendency in the bud. These local altruistic bodies

should keep politicians at a respectable distance. Religion being a personal matter every locality committees should help each religion to exist in peace and everyone should partake in all religious activities, especially of the other communities.

Sanathana Dharma swears by one world, one family motto. Islam vows to respect other religions and Christianity believes in loving every one. No religion hates another religion. No religion propagates crime in any form. All religions are there for the good of humanity at large. Fanatics will be weakened if the people in society help to make people live in peace, camaraderie and mutual respect.

Media these days also abet violence by highlighting the same. We hardly get to see or read about any good deed while there are millions of people engaged in doing good to others. What the media report, for survival of course, is only sensationalism.

Let us also try and make the media understand its obligation

No religion hates another religion. No religion propagates crime in any form. All religions are there for the good of humanity at large. Fanatics will be weakened if the people in society help to make people live in peace, camaraderie and mutual respect.

to society. If all of us ignore politicians, the latter will also understand their duty to society. The reason why people run after power is to get some bread crumbs thrown at them.

Just as every disease, from common cold to cancer, is born in the human mind, criminality is also born there. Let us make human mind tranquil which makes universal consciousness (society's mind) tranquil.

Yoga is one such non-religious activity that could help do this in society. It is time to *THINK* for the future good of humans lest humankind should soon become extinct like the

dinosaurs. We need the police, the judiciary as also the rulers when we are in trouble. But let us not trust them to keep us healthy and happy.

If any one wants good health he/she should avoid hospitals and doctors, if one wants his/her honour preserved he/she should avoid the police and if one wants justice, judiciary should be kept at a distance.

BUT when one is ill he needs hospitals and doctors, if one is hurt by others, police might help and if injustice is done judiciary could help. Similarly to keep communal harmony let us keep all these institutions at a respectable distance. They would have a secondary role to play in the unlikely event of communal harmony being disturbed in an otherwise tranquil society. Let us remember what Gandhi ji wrote: "the philosophy of an eye for an eye would leave all of us blind eventually."

"The bravest things are the tenderest. The loving are the daring."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

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39th Jnanpith Award

Winner

Govind Vinayak Karandikar

Poet Par Excellence

Veena Adige

Vinda Karandikar, a towering figure in modern Marathi poetry has bagged for Maharashtra its third prestigious Jnanpith award, India's highest literary award. Apart from the citation plaque, the award also carries an amount of Rs. 5,00,000 (\$11,000).

It was a proud moment for the residents of Sahitya Sahwas colony in Bandra, Mumbai when

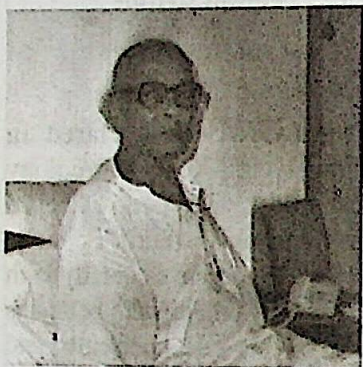
the award was declared in January this year. The colony came alive when people flocked to Anandwan's fourth floor flat where Vindaji lives quietly with his family. There were bouquets and sweets, telephone calls, and people flocked to his house but he remained quiet but happy.

'I am merely a symbol,' he says modestly, 'I am now 88 years of age, I have written and spoken

Govind Vinayak Karandikar, leading Marathi poet, essayist, critic and translator was born on August 23, 1918 at Dhalawal, a small village in Sindhudurg district of Konkan region of Maharashtra. Author of 30 books, they include five books of poems, 12 books of children's verses, two books of personal essays among others.

all that I wanted to and now I have retired.'

'No interviews,' he said firmly but consented to meet me for a brief period. His telephone is unlisted and one has to go through friends and neighbours to talk to him. I met him on a warm evening on the dot of five and he



Vinda Karandikar

was ready. 'I don't want to advise anyone and I don't have any message for anyone,' he declared

Vinda's famous poems:

Swedganga (1949)

Mridaganga, (1954)

Dhripad, (1959)

Jatak and (1968)

Virupika (1981)

when asked whether he wanted to give his fans some messages.

Author of thirty books, winner of more than twenty awards and prizes, Vinda Karandikar is now a happy and satisfied man with a doting wife Suma, two sons, one daughter and four grandchildren.

He started life in abject poverty and had to depend on relatives and friends for his education. He was sent to a distant aunt in a nearby village for his primary education. Vithoba Ranade, a family friend, took him to Kolhapur, arranged for his food at seven different families for the seven days of the week and arranged for his accomodation.

Vindaji recognises this as a turning point in his career as he got the opportunity for higher education and this opened up new vistas of knowledge which made him a professor of English instead of Marathi. His first poem, Nouka (the ship) was published in the school magazine.

Though the atmosphere was not conducive to poetry writing, a school friend, R.D.Deodhar encouraged him. He wrote

poems, translated English literature and became famous as a poet, a writer and a critic.

However, Vindaji is a non-sense person. He taught English literature in SIES college till he retired in 1976 and put a full stop to his creative literary writings in the 80s.

He is simple, scholarly and even a bit eccentric. He gave up his traditional professorial dress long ago, revels in his simple white kurta and pyjama and is equally at ease doing carpentry and even cobbler work at home. Much of the furniture in the house has the stamp of his workmanship. Quite something for one born into a Brahmin farmer family in coastal Konkan

Vinda Karandikar's name was inseparable from two other progressive poets, Vasant Bapat and Mangesh Padgaonkar, and the trio thrilled gatherings of thousands of poetry lovers for decades with their readings.

Vinda's awards:

- *Critics award of Lalit Paritoshik Samiti (1967)**
- *Senior Fulbright Award (1967)**
- *Keshavsut Prize (1968)**
- *Sovietland Nehru Literaray Award (1976)**
- *Kumaran Asan Award (1982)**
- *Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad Prize (1985)**
- *Kusumagraj Puraskar (1987)**
- *Kabir Sanman (1991)**
- *Janasthan Puraskar (1993)**
- *Konark Samman (1993)**
- *Gangadhar National Award for Poetry (1999)**
- *Dr. Labhshetwar Sahitya Puraskar (2002)**
- *Jnanpith Award (2003)**

and who has done excellent translations into Marathi of Aristotle's Poetics, Goethe's Faust and Shakespeare's King Lear.

He is known to be tight-fisted, but has given away lakhs of cash awards for charity.

His poems are available in English. One of the anthologies 'Poems of Vinda' is dedicated to A. K. Ramanujam with whom he spent weeks going over the translations during his stay in Chicago. He is greatly impressed by Ramanujam's poetry as well as his translations of old Tamil and Kannada

poetry.

Vinda Karandikar's poems are romantic in character. He was fascinated by the English language and hence he specialised in it and became a lecturer of

GHETA (Marathi)



*Raktamadhil
prashnasathi
Prithvikadun hokar
ghyave*

*Usalalelya
daryakadun
Pisalaleli maya
ghyavi*

*Bharalelyasha
bheemekadun
Tukobachi maal
ghyavi*

*Denaryane deta jave
Ghenaryane ghetta jave*

*Hiravya pivalya malavarun
Hiravi pivali shaal ghyavi
Sahyadrichya kadyakadun
Chhatisathi dhal ghyavi*

*Vedyapisya dhagakadun
Vedepise aakar ghyave*

*Denaryane deta jave
Ghenaryane ghetta
jave*

*Ghetta ghetta ek divas
Denaryache haat
ghyave*

English. His studies of Browning, Hopkins and Eliot influenced his poetry .

An admirer of Veer Sawarkar, the RSS and the Arya Samaj, he became a s a t y a g r a h i (Bhagannagar Movement directed against the Nizam's oppressive rule) and

courted arrest several times. He was arrested in Paithan and was released after four months of rigorous imprisonment.

One of his most celebrated and early work is the anthology interestingly called *Swed Ganga*, a Ganga of sweat, in which he extols the contribution of sweat and the labour of workers. This had a major influence on Narayan Surve, a poet, a street orphan and textile worker, now known for his writing.



Vindaji with his wife Sumatai

1939 to 1946 were significant years in Vinda's life when he developed intellectually. His first wife Yesu Gokhale died and he embraced Gandhism in his search for peace. He plied the charkha, wore Khadi and also participated in the Quit India Movement.

In 1943, Vindaji turned to the study of Marxism which resulted in a major intellectual crisis in his life.

His poems in '*Swedganga*' are synthesis of Marxist philosophy and Indian symbolism.

'*Raktasamadhi*' is a presentation of sexual experience and ecstasy.

'My creative writing is a

ceaseless experimentation in my efforts to cope with the complexity of human emotions and the reality of modern social ethos,' he says.

His poems have a variety which brings to the surface contradictory aesthetic, emotional, and intellectual attitudes. They include realism and fantasy, Marxist concern with social reality.

'No kind of mood or emotion or experience,' he says in an earlier interview, 'And no kind of language, style or form is basically unpoetic. I believe in open view of poetry and in no preconceived credo.' Most of his outstanding Marathi poems have been translated into English, a few in Gujarati

and Hindi. He thus became a name outside Maharashtra.

However his poetry was not always smooth sailing. He came under severe criticism for his 'Virupika' on Ganapati where he had to face threats of legal action and physical assault.

On the whole, however, his career was leaps from success to success and now the jewel in his crown is the prestigious Jnanpith award.

'I will not be able to go to Delhi for receiving the award,' he says. A patient of blood pressure and partial amnesia, his age makes it difficult for him to travel and the authorities will have to make arrangements for him to receive the award in Mumbai itself.



Karandikar has refused to make compromises, refused to run for presidentship of the Marathi Sahitya Sammelan, a hotly contested annual event in which reputed writers go canvassing for votes. He has also refused to work on government committees or curry favours with ministers.

The Four Editions of Ramayana

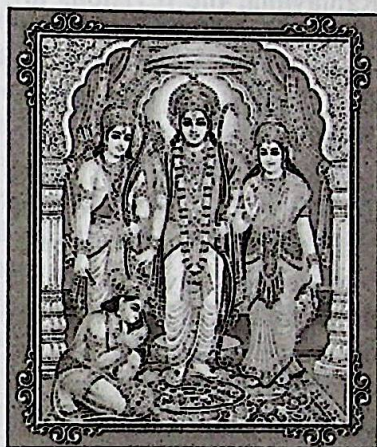
N. R. Waradpande

It is well recognised that the original of the Mahabharata was edited twice and the edition now available is the third edition which was prepared by Souti sometime in the later half of the second millennium B.C.

But Ramayana is different. It is regarded as a unitary work written by one author.

A critical reading, however, of the work available to us and known as the Valmiki Ramayana shows clearly that this work also, like the Mahabharata, has undergone revisions. In fact, it has undergone three revisions as against only two of the Mahabharata.

I am using the word revision and not interpolation because interpolations are few and far between. But in the case of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata



the so-called interpolations are more extensive than the original work! The original work of Vyasa is supposed to have contained only 8,000 verses whereas the work now available contains 1,00,000 verses.

It is, therefore, more justifiable to describe the additions as revised and enlarged editions. In preparing such

editions, the editors did not remove any portion of the original. They, at the most, have rearranged them.

It is to be noted that the editors do not conceal the fact of the revision. In the case of the Ramayana, the revisions are clearly mentioned as revisions. The current edition of the Ramayana contains two lists of contents.

The first which is more ancient does not mention the *balakanda* and the *uttarkanda*. The second says about the *uttarkanda* that the poet composed this *kanda* in order to describe future events. This is a clear admission that the events described in it had not occurred when this *kanda* was composed.

We are further told that the oldest work was called *Pulastyaavadha*, that is the slaying of Pulastya, that is a Ravana and not Ramayana.

This is on all fours with the Mahabharata where Vyasa is said to have composed a work called Jaya and not Mahabharata and this work described only the

victory of the Pandavas over the Kauravas. The work of Vyasa contained only the *yuddhaparva*.

The author of the Paulastyaavadha was called Praachetas and not Valmiki. Praachetas was the 10th son of Prachetas. Prachetas is the composer of 10/164 of the Rgveda. Praachetas obviously was not the name of the author of the Paulastyaavadha. The appellation Praachetas only tells us who his father was.

There are difficulties in identifying Praachetas with Valmiki. According to tradition, Valmiki was a highwayman belonging to the Koli caste and not the son of any sage.

Here again, the name Valmiki, tells us who the father was; it does not tell us what his own name was.

I was told by two professors of Sanskrit that Valmiki's name was Ratnakara, though they could not refer me to any source.

The name sounds classical and not Vedic and was probably given in the last edition of the Ramayana.

So it is fairly certain that Valmiki was not Praachetas.

Valmiki, therefore, was not the author of the *Pulastyavadha*, that is, the *yuddha kanda*. In view of the two lists of contents, we cannot say that Valmiki composed the rest of the Ramayana because the *uttarkanda* and the *balkanda* composers were different from the composers of the rest of the present Ramayana. Valmiki, therefore, composed only the *ayodhya*, *aranya*, *kishkindha* and the *sundar kandas*.

Valmiki's Four Kandas

A critical reading of the *Yuddhakanda* reveals that the weapons used in the war were pre-copper weapons, were made of stone. The use of a shield made of ox-skin shows that copper- weapons which can easily pierce ox-skin were not in vogue. The killing of Vajradanshtra by Angada by his *khadga* which split Vajradantra's head in two pieces by a stab when he was resting

on all fours shows that this *khadga* was really the horn of a rhinoceros as the name literally means. A copper dagger would pierce the head through without splitting it into two pieces.

The horn of a rhinoceros however is very thick and must split the head when thrust into the back of the head with force. This weaponry indicates that the fighting took place in the pre- copper age, that is, much before 3000 B.C.

Pulastyavadha and Valmiki's four *kandas* could not have been separated by a long time gap.

There are verses in the *aranyakanda* which indicate that the *hemanta* in those days started in the month of *Pousha* and the rains



in the *Bhadrapada*. These two statements point to 3700 B.C. But Rama's birth itself is said to have taken place in this period. Rama is said to have been born in the twelfth month that is the end of the year which began in spring. In other words, this was the winter season. This fits in with the beginning of *hemanta* in *pausha* and rains in *bhadrapada*. So these three statements are not removed by many centuries from the composition of the Paulastyavadha.

But the verse about the birth of Rama occurs in the *Balakanda* which was a later addition. This difficulty can be solved by supposing that the statement about Rama's birth formed part of the Paulastyavadha and in the process of re-editing it was shifted to the *balakanda*.

So we place Paulastyavadha in 3700 B.C. and these four *kandas* composed by Valmiki or Ratnakara in say 3500 B.C.

Now where do we place the *balakanda* and the *uttarakanda*?

We get a clue to this in the

statement that the rains began in the month of *shravana*. This period is between 1500 and 2500 B.C. In order to get a more accurate estimate we take a lead from the Mahabharata.

The Mahabharata also contains a statement that the rains started in *shravana*. It further contains a statement that at the time of Janamejaya to whom Vaishampayana narrated the Mahabharata, a 1000 years of the *kaliyuga* had gone by.

This clearly indicates that Vaishampayana flourished a 1000 years after Vyasa and the second edition of the Mahabharata was prepared in this period. It is reasonable to suppose that the addition of the *Balakanda* and the *Uttarkanda* which constituted the third edition of the Ramayana were composed in this very period.

Why was the need to compose the *balakanda* and the *uttarkanda* felt in this particular period? The motive behind the composition of the Uttarkanda is clear. The ideas about the sexual



purity of women had become stricter. The society felt uneasy that Rama whom it holds in the highest esteem should accept a wife who had stayed with another man for months. So the saga of the abandonment of Sita.

Further it seems that the ideas of caste distinctions had also become rigid. So the notorious story of Shambuka.

The influence of insisting on the sexual purity of women is at work in the Mahabharata also. Draupadi is insulted as *bandhaki* for having five husbands. The removal of the upper garment,

which slaves were not entitled to wear, is carried to the extent of removing the sari which could be saved only by divine intervention! The story of Amba describes how Shalva refuses to accept her because she was abducted by *Beeshma*.

The change of values is further emphasised by making Parashuram, a hero of the Rama period, to fight for Amba and getting defeated by Bheeshma, the hero representing the new values.

Caste rigidity is similarly emphasised. Karna is repeatedly insulted for being a *Soota*.

In fact, Karna was a *Soota* only by adoption. Contrast this with the case of Krishna who was really a *Soota* being descended from Yadu, a son of the Brahmin Devayani by the Kshatriya Yayati. That is why he is seen as performing the duties of *Soota*, namely, driving and narrating *puranas*. Still he is never insulted for being a *Soota* though there were characters like Shishupala who would spare no occasion to insult him.



This clearly shows that the Srikrishna episodes are of the Vyasa period and by the Vaishampayan period Krishna had already been elevated to divinity and it was not possible to insert stories of caste insult.

The *raison d'être* of the *Balakanda*

The quarrel of Vasistha and Vishvamitra described in the *Balakanda* serves to emphasise the superhuman efforts required by a Kshatriya to become a Brahman and thus reinforces the burden of the *Uttarkanda*.

But the *Balakanda* has more varied *raison d'être*. The consideration in inserting the *Balakanda* was to emphasise the divinity which Rama had acquired by then by describing him as an *avatara*.

At the time of the composition of the *Balakanda* both Rama and Krishna had become *avatars* of Vishnu.

The other prominent god in the Veda, namely, Shiva was worshipped even before Rama and Krishna who were human beings to start with. The spread of the worship of Rama and Krishna gave birth to the Shaiva-Vaishnava cleavage.

The devotees of Shiva must have felt that their God was being belittled by this worship of human forms of Vishnu.

This may have resulted in an anti-Vishnu feeling.

The episode of the bow of Shiva in the Ramayana seems to have been designed to show that the bow of Vishnu was superior to the bow of Shiva and Rama as Vishnu could easily break it.

The spread of the worship of Rama and Krishna gave birth to the Shaiva-Vaishnava cleavage. The devotees of Shiva must have felt that their God was being belittled by this worship of human forms of Vishnu. This may have resulted in an anti-Vishnu feeling.

There is an express statement in the canto *vaishnavadhanuprashansa* that Vishnu is superior to Shiva. The story of the *dhanurbhanga* and the marriage of Sita, therefore, seems to have been conceived at the time of this third edition. In fact, this must have been the main *raison d'être* for the addition of the *Balakanda*.

The Shaiva-Vaishnava cleavage is also at work in the story which reports that the power of Ravana, the villain of the Ramayana, was derived from Shiva.

The third edition has not

been ascribed to any author because its composers wanted to pass it on as part of the original and their names are not found anywhere in the available Ramayana.

But the person who compiled the fourth and the final edition has been clearly mentioned as Bhargava and he is said to have added 100 *upaakhyayas* or subsidiary stories.

The Bhageeratha story and the absolution of Ahalya in the *Balakanda* and all similar accessory stories can be ascribed to this Bhargava.

This last addition must have taken place in the later half of the first century B.C. since some of the subsidiary stories refer to the *yavanas* that is, the Greeks and the Shakas.

The description of Ayodhya also must have been added at this time because according to Dr. Lal, Ayodhya did not exist before 700 B.C.

The fourth edition is clearly post Buddhistic because Buddha is clearly mentioned.

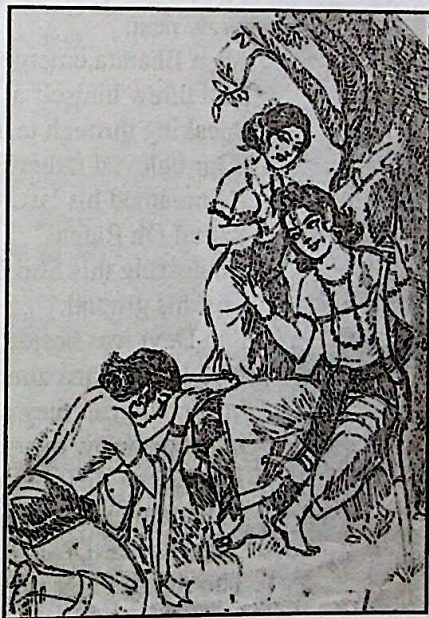


Bharata Charitram

Sudha Subramanian

Having left the tearful people of Ayodhya
Sound asleep on the banks of the Tamas,
Shri Rama, Laxmana and Sita
Accompanied by the faithful minister Sumantra
Crossed the Veda Shruti and Gomathi,
Reaching the southern border of Koshala Kingdom;
From whence, alighting from the chariot,
They faced Ayodhya and offered prayers.
Then proceeded to the northern bank
Of the pure, faultless and bountiful Ganga.
Here they met Guha,
The Chief of the tribes
Who agreed to sail them over
To the southern bank.
Then Rama commanded the tearful Sumantra
To return to Ayodhya.
Replied he, in broken voice;
Emanating through rivulets of tears,
"I cannot return, my Lord
With an empty chariot.
Come back to your Kingdom
Venture no further".
But breaking yet another heart,

They bade Sumantra return
 Reminding him of the call of duty,
 Entrusting him with the responsibility
 Of assisting Bharata well,
 Of carrying back the message
 Of their journey and well-being
 To Father Dasharatha and the Queen Mothers.
 Guha sailed them over to the southern bank
 From whence they proceeded to Prayag
 Where the Ganga and Yamuna meet.
 Here they offered *pranams*
 To the great Rishi Bharadwaja.
 He blessed them and guided them
 To set up camp in Chitrakoota
 Across the river Yamuna.
 So there they set up
 abode,
 By the banks of the
 Mandakini.
 With jungle fruits and
 roots for food,
 In quiet surrender to
 benevolent nature
 They spent some days;
 When one day,
 Frightened birds took
 to air,
 Alarmed animals took
 to their heels,
 A strong wind blew
 onwards
 A cloud of dust
 gathered in the sky,





The sound of horses' hooves rent the air.
Hurriedly climbing up a tree,
Lakshmana perceived an advancing army.
"Alas!", said he, "It is the wicked Bharata.
Not satisfied with the Kingdom,
He wants to slay us all".

"Speak not thus in haste, Lakshmana",
said the benevolent Rama.

"Bharata harbours great love for us,

Let's see what brings him here".

Wielding his bow and arrow,
Lakshmana stood prepared
To take on Bharata and his troops.

Shri Rama and Sita stood,
Perplexed and wondering.

The cloud of dust advanced,
Drew near,

Then Bharata emerged
And threw himself at Rama's feet;

Speaking through tears,
"Our beloved father is no more,
He breathed his last, Calling out,
Rama! Oh Rama!"

On hearing this Shri Rama
Lost his ground,

Sita Devi was beside him in anguish
And Lakshmana almost swooned.

In shared grief they consoled each other;
In deep sorrow they lamented
The loss of their beloved father.

Bharata then entreated,
"Shri Rama! Dear brother!

The rightful heir to the throne!

I beseech you, go no further.
 For Mother Kaikeyi's false desire,
 Why should you atone?
 She wants me to rule the Kingdom,
 And you to go to the forest?
 Are such boons worth granting,
 Even if father had given his word?
 I cannot live without you;
 My days will be darker
 Than the jungle nights,
 My heart will lie broken
 In smithereens strewn;
 My breath will course
 Through unhappy streams
 My life cannot sustain
 Without your gaze so divine;
 If you leave, dear brother,
 I will die a living death".
 Thus did Bharata beseech
 Rama,
 Imploring him to return.
 Shri Rama held his brother
 To his chest in close gather
 He wiped the tears
 from his brother's face,
 Then stepped back
 And firmly said,
 "Go dear brother,
 Return from these banks;
 Return to Ayodhya
 Don't persuade me from the
 rightful path
 For I have to keep our father's word.



Before us lies an uphill task
And your task is no less arduous
For on your trustworthy shoulders
Will lie the future of Ayodhya".

"Oh no!" said Bharata,
"I do not want the Kingdom.
You are the all-pervading light
You are knowledgeable, righteous,
honourable and dutiful,
You are the rightful heir.

I want to serve you, dear brother
I want to follow your path".

"Don't speak thus, Bharata",
Shri Rama admonished.

"You shall rule well

That is my order.

Your duty as a younger brother
Lies in carrying out my wish'.

"Oh Rama!" wept Bharata,
Soaking his brother's feet in tears.

"What punishment you have given me!

You are the lustre of the crown,
On my head it will prick like thorns.

I do not want that throne,

I'd rather take my life".

Aghast, Shri Rama reminded him

Of the people of Ayodhya,

Of the Queen mothers

Kaushalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra,

Of his duty to the Kingdom.

"I know no duty", said he,

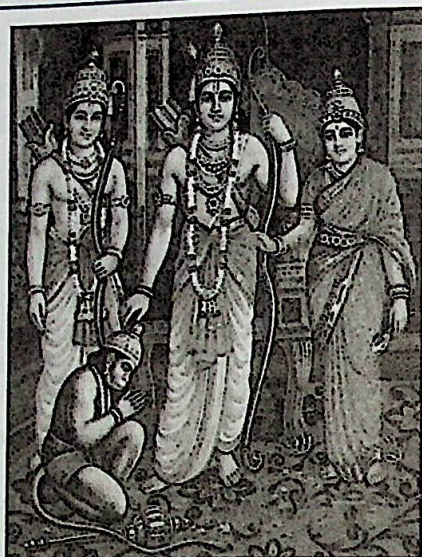
"Greater than my love for you;

I shall return only with you,





Or I'll perish at your lotus feet".
Picking him up in his arms,
Shri Rama cajoled and coaxed
His dear, forlorn,
broken-hearted brother.
"Waver not", he admonished
"Await our return
In fourteen years time".
As unflinching from his path
As Shri Rama stood,
Equally unflinching, imploring,
Bharata stood.
Through tears then, he said,
"Dear brother, you have told me
To await your return
For fourteen long years.
Each second shall weigh heavily
On my heart.
But adamant, stubborn and resolute
That you are,
I love you
And shall honour your words,
Your path of duty.
Yet let me tell you,
I shall not ascend the throne.
Give me your *padukas*,
That I may worship them
And await your arrival.
Let me also tell you
That if you delay a single day more
Than the last day of the fourteenth year,
I shall immolate myself,
I shall await no longer".



Beholding this ardent love,
 Lakshmana and Sita stood speechless
 The birds, animals and trees of Chitrakoot
 Shed silent tears of profound feeling,
 The army stood a tearful ground
 As no army before had been,
 The heavens watched and bowed their head
 At such pure brotherly love,
 At such whole-hearted pledge to duty,
 At righteousness amidst suffering etched.
 Thus did Bharata then return
 And placed Shri Rama's *padukas* on the throne.
 Hiding his grief within himself,
 Awaiting the passage of fourteen long years,
 He looked after the Kingdom and the subjects well,
 Such a great and noble character
 Bharata! Posterity will tell.

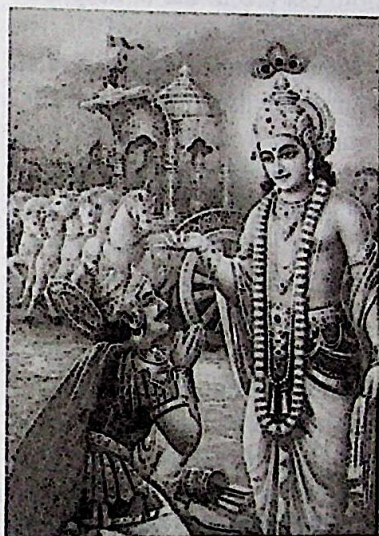
Ramnavami is on April 6, 2006.

Let Noble Thoughts Come to us from Every side

Swami Sudarshananda

There is a sublime prayer in the Rigveda: "*aano bhadraah kratavo yantu vishvatah*" - let noble thoughts come from every side. It is a very lofty prayer. Noble thoughts fill our minds and hearts with elation. Sublime thoughts make us high-spirited. Good thoughts raise us aloft. By thinking of noble thoughts we transmute into something higher. The more lofty, the more grand our thought, the better we become. That's why the sages of yore used to pray to acquire noble thoughts from every side.

Swami Vivekananda has emphatically said, "Every good thought that we send to the world, without thinking of any return, will be stored up there and break one link in the chain, and



Arjun-Krishna

make us purer and purer, until we become the purest mortals."

Thoughts are contagious. Even if a man shuts himself in a room his sublime and noble thoughts elevate mankind. The fact that the

illuminated souls do not necessarily have to talk or preach. Their life, their holiness and their holy thoughts will help mankind. This help comes to those who open their hearts to receive the holy thoughts. Thoughts of purity and holiness are in the atmosphere. The noble thoughts of Christ, Krishna, Buddha, Ramakrishna, and other great holy men and women, though not living in physical bodies, are still helping and guiding mankind.

If one projects thoughts of hatred and jealousy, those evil thoughts will rebound on him with compound interest. No power can avert them. When once one has put them in motion, one will have to bear them. If one remembers this fact it will

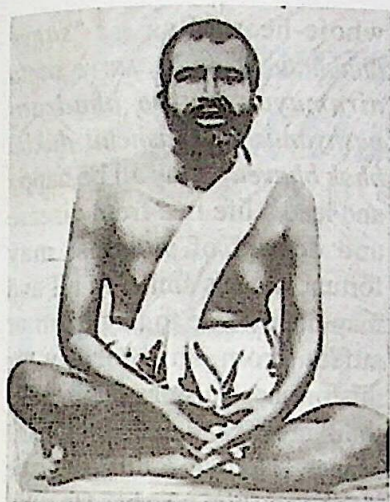
The noble thoughts of Christ, Krishna, Buddha, Ramakrishna, and other great holy men and women, though not living in physical bodies, are still helping and guiding mankind.

prevent him from thinking evil about others.

We are what our thoughts have made us. So take care of what you think. You may have heard that the cockroach, by intently thinking on the *bhramara*, is transformed into a *bhramara*. In the verse sixth of the chapter VIII of the Bhagavad-Gita, Sri Krishna says, "*Yam vapi smaran bhavam tyajatyante kalevaram; Tam tamevaiti kaunteya sada tadbhava bhavitah.*"

Whatever being a man thinks of at the last moment when he leaves his body, that alone does he attain, O Kaunteya being ever absorbed in the thought thereof.

Bhagavan Sri Krishna says, "The essence of the sum total of the entire thoughts and feelings that have been taking place in the mind of man during the span of his life, stands condensed into a single state of mind at the time of his departure from the body. To effect the thought of the Lord at the last moment is therefore well nigh impossible. Preparation for



Ramakrishna Paramahansa

it has to go on all through the life. He who is absorbed in the thought of God while departing from the body gets merged in Cosmic Consciousness. And this is *mukti* getting which there is no more return to mundane life. This is the universal law; there need be no doubt about it."

Swami Vivekananda has said, "Our thoughts make things beautiful, our thoughts make things ugly." The following story tells us how true it is.

Once two friends were going along the street. They saw some people listening to a reading of

the Bhagavata. 'Come, friend', said one to the other. 'Let us hear the sacred book.'

So saying he went in and sat down. The second man peeped in and went away. He entered a house of ill fame.

But, very soon he felt disgusted with the place.

'Shame on me!' he said to himself. 'My friend has been listening to the sacred word of Hari; and see where I am?'

But the friend who had been listening to the Bhagavata also became disgusted. "What a fool I am!" he said, "I have been listening to this fellow's, blah-blah, and my friend is having a grand time."

In course of time they both died. The messenger of Death came for the soul of the one

If one projects thoughts of hatred and jealousy, those evil thoughts will rebound on him with compound interest. No power can avert them. When once one has put them in motion, one will have to bear them.

who had listened to the Bhagavata and dragged it off to hell. The messenger of God came for the soul of the one who had been to the house of prostitution and took it to heaven.

Verily, the Lord looks into a man's heart and thought. He does not judge him by what he does or where he lives. God accepts a man's inner noble thoughts. A man cannot live without thinking something or the other. Therefore, if we have to think, we should think good thoughts and great thoughts. The only way to suppress base impressions is to go on thinking holy thoughts.

In order to make our own future bright we must have good thoughts and good deeds. We will get help from every corner if we have good thoughts.

Every morning after getting up we must chant sincerely and

whole-heartedly, "*sarve bhabantu sukhinah, sarve santu niramayah, sarve bhadrani pashyantu, ma kashchit dukha bhak bhavet.*" May all be happy and lead a life free from disease and devoid of worries; may fortune always smile on all and may none come to any harm or suffer from any sorrow or misfortune. Tulsidas has said in the Aranyakanda of Ramcharit Manas, "Nothing is difficult to be attained by him who has the good of others at heart."

Let me conclude the topic with the lofty words of Swami Vivekananda about thought: "Even thinking the least good of others gradually instills into the heart the strength of a lion. All that man has to do is to take care of three things; good thought, good word and good deed".

SWEET THOUGHT

Sri Krishna Sweets

PRODUCERS OF PURE GHEE SWEETS

OF THE VEDAS I AM THE
SAMAVEDA; I AM INDRA AMONG
THE GODS; OF THE SENSES I AM
THE MIND AND AMONG LIVING
BEINGS I AM CONSCIOUSNESS.

- Bhagavad Gita

Humane Devotees of Hanuman

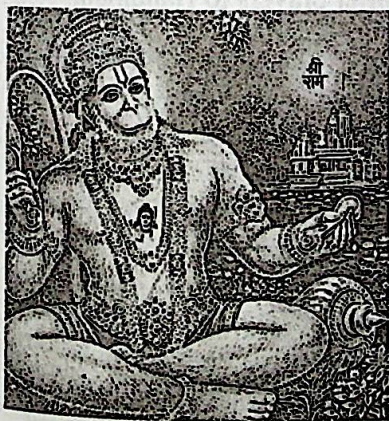
A. B. Sai Prasad

Devotees irrespective of their religious beliefs, are like mothers. A mother, for the sake of her child, may even walk up to a distant Dargah, barefeet, to seek the blessings of a Sufi saint even if she is a staunch Hindu. She may, in scorching sun, go to a mosque with her sick child and wait in a line patiently for the 'namajis' to return after their afternoon

prayers. When they blow air by keeping their right hand palm near the body of her sick baby, she gets immense satisfaction. She strongly believes that the holy air which follows the holy chanting of Quran will cure her child. With all sincerity she goes to a church and offers prayers to Christ. She will happily light candles and give thanksgiving ad in the newspapers.

We know many non-Hindus are contributing liberally to Anna Danam of temples like Tirupati, Udupi, Guruvayur, Sabarimala, Thiruvananthapuram, ISKCON etc. Similarly, 'Sankat Mochan' Hanuman is also being worshipped by many non-Hindus who are basically humane in their approach and belief.

It is a wellknown fact that a Muslim princess, the daughter of



Hanuman

Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb was a staunch devotee of Lord Venkateswara of Tirupati.

In north India, particularly in Rajasthan, people address Hanuman as Balaji. This may be the reason for offering first pooja to a small Hanuman idol which is kept before one enters the sanctum sanctorum of Balaji temple of Hyderabad which is otherwise known as Birla temple. In Karnataka, Lord Venkateswara is addressed as "Tirupati Thimmappa", the Mehandipur temple (On Jaipur-Bandi Kuyee National Highway of Rajasthan) is widely known as Balaji temple only.

Gratitude never knows any religion. It is a religion, nay a universal religion, by itself. Humaneness is the cardinal principle of this religion.

Sultan Mansoor Ali Khan, the administrator of Lucknow and Gazhiabad, Muhammad Ali Shah Nawab of Oudh and his wife Rabiya Begum, Aliya Begum, the grandmother of Nawab Vajid Ali Shah of Oudh and British soldiers of Sasaram

(Bihar) barracks were some of the followers of this religion. Their names are associated with the famous Hanuman temples of UP and Bihar. They have directly contributed for the construction and maintenance of Hanuman temples.

Those who have visited Ayodhya might have had the *darshan* of Hanuman Ghari Temple. The temple was renovated three hundred years ago by Sultan Mansoor Ali, the administrator of Lucknow and Gazhiabad. His only son was once taken ill, and his condition became grave. Abhaya Ram Das advised Sultan Mansoor Ali to offer prayers to Hanuman.

Forgetting the fact that he is an administrator and a non-believer in idol worship, he offered his prayers. His prayers were heard and his son recovered. Sultan Mansoor Ali offered 52 bighas (a bigha is equal to $5/8^{\text{th}}$ of an acre) of land for the construction of Hanuman temple, with a fine garden. He contributed money for the construction of the temple. This



Hanuman and Sri Ram

may be the first temple of Hanuman for which an administrator by name Sultan Mansoor Ali of Lucknow and Gazhiabad was responsible.

In Aliganj of Lucknow, we find a famous temple of Hanuman. It is said it owes its existence to Nawab of Oudh Muhammad Ali Shah and his wife Rabiya Begum. Shahs were issueless. Someone advised Rabiya Begum to approach a Hindu sadhu of Islambadi. It was once known by the name of

Hanuman Badi. He, in turn, requested her to offer prayers to Hanuman. Hanuman blessed Rabiya Begum with motherhood.

As directed by Hanuman in her dream, a Hanuman idol was brought to Aliganj from Islambadi and a temple was constructed. Now, every year, a mela is organised. Food and clothes are distributed among the needy. For this mela, Aliya Begum, the grandmother of Nawab Vajid Ali Shah – Nawab of Oudh – is responsible.

Aliya Begum was bedridden once. As per the advice of her well-wishers, she offered her prayers to Hanuman of Aliganj. She miraculously recovered. To show her gratitude, she organised a huge mela near the temple. Food was served to the needy.

People of Tamil Nadu talk about 'Eri Kaatha Raman' of Madurantakam. It is popularly believed that the English Collector saw Rama and Lakshmana protecting the town, from heavy downpour, from floods. A similar story is in circulation as far as Sasaram

(Bihar) temple of Hanuman is concerned. Like Lord Rama, even Hanuman was born in Kataka Lagna. This makes him rush to the help of people who need protection.

During the British period, a Zamindar of Ghar-Nokha (near Sasaram, Sahasra Aaraam was its original name) picked up an idol of Hanuman from a forest. After reaching Sasaram, the elephant which was carrying the idol refused to move. The Zamindar left the idol there and proceeded further. Locals used to offer prayers to this abandoned roofless Hanuman. After some time, a temporary barrack was built there. The Britishers used to abuse the idol. They christened Hanuman as 'Monkey God' and started ridiculing him. Locals who used to offer prayers could not come because of the

Britishers' fear.

Once, a severe epidemic claimed many lives in the barrack. They thought Hanuman was angry with them and so they offered prayers to Hanuman. They constructed a temple and made arrangements for Nitya Pooja. Soon, the epidemic disappeared.

After sometime, they vacated the place and the Zamindar of Ghar Nokha constructed a big temple. This Hanuman faced north to please the Zamindar as his house was on the northern side of Sasaram.

Jesus Christ once said: "Belief has got enormous strength. With firm belief, you ask the mountains which are standing before you to move out. They will oblige you by moving out". Have faith in Hanuman. He will never disappoint you.

SWEET THOUGHT

Sri Krishna Sweets

PRODUCERS OF PURE GHEE SWEETS

**AMONG PRIESTS, KNOW ME TO
BE THEIR CHIEF BRHASPATI;
AMONG GENERALS I AM SKANDA;
AMONG THE SEATS OF WATER, I
AM THE OCEAN.**

- Bhagavad Gita

Art, Religion and Science - II

Ramdas

In the West, art as mimesis or imitation of creation in Nature, continued till the end of the 19th century. Among the European nations, Italy was "Artists' Paradise" during the 15th-16th century. France was a dominant European nation in the 17th century and in the 19th century, there were a series of great French artists like Delacroix, Ingres, Courbet, Manet, Cezanne and Gauguin. The Spanish kingdom had reached its greatest extent and power in the 16th century.

The Spaniards and the Dutch have had cultural efflorescence in the 17th century. Among the German were great musicians like Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and Wagner, during the 18th-19th century. U. K. had reached the

zenith of its power during the reign of Queen Victoria, but Germany was more belligerent, like Japan in Asia.

Nature is an inexhaustible source of the mysterious. The last quarter of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century, witnessed a prolific scientific creativity, promoting various scientific inventions, e.g. phonograph, photography (1877), light-bulb (1879), recoil operated machine gun (1882), the first synthetic fibre (1883), Parsons steam turbine (1884), petrol engine (1885), Tesla electric motor, Dunlop pneumatic tyre, Kodak camera (1888), cordite (1889), Diesel engine (1892), Ford car (1893), cinematography (1894), X-ray, movie camera (1895), wireless

telegraphy (1896), Radioactivity (1894), the first voice radio transmission (1901), rocket drive, aeroplane (1903), the principle of energy-mass equivalence (1905) and so on.

Like the two World Wars, breakdown of the old-world-order continued, unleashing widespread uncertainty and instability everywhere, e.g. the Russian Revolution (1917-1921), the Great Depression (1929-1939), the Chinese Revolution (1911-1949), the end of Colonialism and the rise of the Third World (1945 onwards), the Cold War (1946-1991), the collapse of the Soviet Union (1985-1991) and so on.

In the midst of all this turmoil, the community of artists felt the imitative art oppressive and sought the freedom normally experienced by other artists like the musical composers. Thus came into existence the modern art, in the early 20th century.

With growing uncertainty and fear in society, art grew more abstract, with less content, free from the 'shadow world' of

meaning.

Thus emerged several "isms" i.e. Surrealism, Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, Vorticism, Dadaism, Pop art and so on, the latest trend being, Minimalism in all forms of art.

Compare the wild, grotesque figures in "Guernica" by Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), reminiscent of the conflicts of World Wars, with the minimalist painting of Donald Judd (1928-1994), only uniform, austere colour bands of light shades, from the background of a saner society, the former artist, a Spaniard and the latter, an American.

Minimalism is based on the principle, "Less is more", meaning, less content, therefore, more space. From the cave paintings, referred to above, to the minimalist painting, man has turned a complete circle, from 'content' to 'no-content'. Contentlessness means space.

From space we began and to space we return:

सर्वानि ह वै इमानि भूतानि
आकाशादेव समुत्पद्यन्ते ।।

"Verily all these things have arisen, from space only." (Chandogya Upanishad: 1/9/1).

U.S. artist Jackson Pollock (1912-1956) in his "drip painting", gave the avant-garde a metaphysical sense of indivisibility, a precursor to Minimalism. Andy Warhol's Pop Art Movement of the 1960s, turned art into a successful business, as a low-rating mass medium. Thus America faces the void of the wholly monetarised art, producing pervert artists like Andres Serrano notorious for his "Piss Christ" (1987), and "Piss Deities" (1988), Robert Mapplethorpe, Cebeza de Vaca and so on.

The wholeness of the holistic art has been replaced by emptiness, thereby pushing back into obsolescence art as a spontaneous creative urge. Such is the making of the machine age, encountering coldness, mechanisation and the hectic tempo of the times.

Self-centredness, though useful in the daily secular activities, has created problems

in other areas of life. In religion, hundreds of sects and sub-sects have been created. If blood is shed in the name of religion, it is because of the clash between the doctrines and dogmas of one religion with those of the other.

True religion is a subjective experience of universal oneness. It is physical religion, the organised religion, the need of the majority in any society, that has proliferated violence.

However, physical religion is a psychological necessity of the worldly-wise society, because, truth is stranger than fiction.

To ensure success in worldly professions, one has to wear a "mask", relative to the socio-cultural context of one's life. One is trained to see the world not with one's own eyes, but with someone else's.

That is why, for example, Ananda Coomarswamy once said to his son, Dr. Ram Coomarswamy: "It takes four years to get a first class University education, but it takes 40 years to get over it."

A successful person

throughout one's life, identifies oneself with a self-image, where the "self", as well as, the "image", are lies. But these very lies procure one the physical necessities of life, in abundance.

A Sufi saint has expressed this issue clearly:

सांचे से तो जग नही,
झूटे मिले न राम ॥

"Resort to Truth and lose the world. Resort to untruth and lose God."

Such is the dilemma. Falsehood responding to the challenges of daily life creates psychological distance between the individual and society, engendering loneliness in the long run. Such a society is a lonely crowd, alienated from the human and non-human existence in the world.

Compared to the superficial communication at the thought level, communication by means of feelings, emotions is substantially deeper.

Aesthetic experience is a feeling, an emotion. Art gives form to the ephemeral

experience of beauty. Emotions pierce through the veneer of the separatist individuality and brings about the union with life around, while the "mask" referred to above, increases the psychic distance. When the psychic distance is eliminated, unity materialises, promoting integral vision of life.

Art, religion and science is a bridge across the chasm which normally separates the individual from the world around.

Science seeks unity through empirical methods in the objective world, arts do the same, through inner, subjective experience and in the religious experience, the mind is ushered into a higher dimension of consciousness, where the duality disappears and one becomes an indivisible part of whatever 'that is', the world 'as it is'.

The Cosmic Creative Energy from which this human body of ours has emerged, has the potential of the greatest artist, the greatest scientist and the greatest religious icon. Certainly!

(Concluded)

The Legend of Sakthan Thampuran

S. V. V. Raghavan

The 200th death anniversary of Sakthan Thampuran passed off on September 29, 2005 without notice by the Govt. of Kerala or the media in general. Kerala owes much to this King who was responsible for major changes in the social fabric of medieval Kerala with its blind superstitious beliefs and class ridden society.

When Rama Varma Raja (later came to be known as Sakthan Thampuran) ascended the throne in 1790, the state of Cochin was in utter chaos. The state was ravaged and looted by Tipu Sultan of Mysore. Tipu took over Trichur in 1789 and making this town his headquarters, he looted temple treasuries to fund his war campaigns.

He damaged the social fabric

of Kerala by subjugating the Brahmins and Nairs and terrorising the farming community. Trade and agricultural were ruined and along with this many towns also faced ruin. There was economic depression. Forcible conversions and destruction of temples brought communal tensions in a state that the Rajas of Cochin had carefully prevented by respecting all religions.

The young prince Rama Varma was a person of extraordinary vision and administrative skills. Immediately after assuming power, he entered into a Treaty with the East India Company. The Mysore Army had already receded to face the British on their home grounds.



Sakthan Thampuran's palace in 1796 AD

He invited several Brahmin businessmen from Pandidesam (present part of Tamilnadu) to settle down in and around Trichur. These families were skilled in cloth merchandise and facilities extended to cloth trade converted Trichur into a flourishing trade center. Slowly the area transformed itself into a trade center for finance and gold besides textiles.

To boost trade, the King remodelled the town, creating specific market areas. He developed the historic Thekkin Kadu Maidan which even today is the heart of Trichur, roads were laid around the maidan, cutting

and removing huge forest of teak trees that surrounded the ancient temple of Sri Vadakkunnathan, thereby earning the displeasure of the upper castes. He developed an alternate

market area called Erattachira (presently renamed Sakthan Thampura Nagar) and encouraged merchants especially the Christians to develop the area.

As one committed to restoration of temples damaged by the Mysore wards, he was responsible for the major repairs and rejuvenation of Sri Vadakkunatha temple at Trichur, the Peruvan Siva temple, the Kudalmanikka temple and Thiruvanchikulam. With temples as the nucleus, he built roads, rest houses, lakes, bridges etc., many of which are serviceable even today. The name of

Thrissuvaperur (original name for Trichur) is derived thanks to his development of three Shiva temples – Vadakkunnatha, Erattachira and Vadakkechira.

Another well-known instance of the 'No Nonsense' attitude of the Raja is associated with the origin of the now famous Trichurpooram. In the olden days there existed only the Arattupuzha Pooram (almost 20 Kms off Trichur). On this auspicious day all the deities in and around the area assembled at this holy place for the Pooram. On one particular year the deities around Trichur could not reach Aarattupuzha on time. Thereupon the local Tantries debarred these temples from partaking in the festival.

On learning this, Sakthan Thampuran ordained that the deities so debarred shall from then on not go to Aarattupuzha. Instead Pooram festival will be conducted in pomp and style at Trichur itself. Thus started the spectacular Trichur Pooram.

During this period, Cochin prospered. There was allround progress in agriculture, law and

order and economy, trade and commerce. He cut down the power of the nobility and feudal landlords.

The institution of Brahminical Yogathiripads in the Vadakkunnatha temple was discontinued, the State took over the administration of major temples. Talukas were formed for centralised administration thereby cutting down the power of feudal nobles. Government officers took over the Talukas, Cochin State paving the way for democratic rule even before Indian independence.

As a mark of respect to Sakthan Thampuran, the Government developed the Sakthan Palace and Fort at Trichur as an Archeological Museum. Tipu Sultan's flag post has been shifted from its original spot. The Raja breathed his last in his favourite Trichur Palace and has been laid to rest in the quiet and green gardens of the Palace. The Raja's simple living is evident in the simplicity of his Palace and its surroundings.



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Gutenberg is Alive

Shri Nath Sahai

It was in 1455 that German printer Johann Gutenberg (C1397-1468) printed the MAZA-RIN BIBLE, in Mainz, Germany. He is believed to have been the first European with movable TYPE. Though his shop, printing press, the type, and all that have now vanished, his books still speak.

Analysing the developments in the book trade, it is noticed that during the eighties book industry marked a new high in publishing.

The British trade weekly *Bookseller* mentioned that publishing was truly big business. Subsequently, it became more international and global. The international development created an impact on the Indian book industry as well to making it more close knit and global.

And foreign publishers,



Johann Gutenberg

visualising the promise and potentialities in the Indian market, were tempted to open their trade offices in India.

Today, the book market in India is thriving and the industry is blooming. By 2020, India will become one of the top three English language book-markets

in the world. The uprising situation has attracted some of the foreign publishers to create their establishment and issue their titles from India. It is a misconception that people are not reading any more, in the age of television etc. it is media that, under their misreading, get tempted to write about and create market for something else, thought saleable for the day.

Even the TV has not hindered the intrinsic passion of bookworms. Today's reader has only shifted in his emphasis. He is for his specialised reading, says Dollar Mittal. And this is caused by the very 'spin-off' from his lifestyle, where everything general is put aside, and given up. Inflow of sex-literature-books, pulp glossy magazines flooding the market has hit and heightened the reading taste of the young mind on this subject.

Jackie Collins, Sidney Sheldon, Harold Robbins sell about 1 to 1.5 lakh copies each, in a year in India. "Clearly there is room for racy writing with sex

and suspense thrown in".

However, people with advancing age go in for religio-culture books to find out and identify themselves with their roots. Likewise, the present day reader, burdened with the financial concerns and apprehensions; and the family stresses and strains, is now more health-conscious and prefer yoga, health-management and self-improvement books. This is why Dale Carnegie, Deepak Chopra, Shiv Khera and Shri Ravi Shankar are picked up to make life interesting, meaningful and happy.

Quite a good number of books by Indians writing in English are being published now than ever before. Amongst the Indian best-sellers, Khushwant Singh, Shobha De, Vikram Seth, Salman Rushdie, Jhumpa Lahiri, Arundhati Roy, Anurag Mathur are mentioned. President APJ Abdul Kalam is Penguin's top selling author. Poet Rabindranath Tagore is still among the top sellers at Rupa, with 70 books in print, by and on him.

It is, however, felt that non-fiction is 'happening' more. Literary non-fiction is the class found in increasing demand. "Narrative non-fiction is the largest selling area for most publishers".

Other favoured subjects being management, travel, business, health, yoga, food and cooking, coffee table books. Self-help books sell a lot more. Current issues like topics of the moment are gaining market as people are getting alive to the happenings around and want to know more. Foreigners look for titles on India and its tribes.

The book market in India is worth around 3,000 crore, of which about 2,200 crore is textbook publication; in English and Indian languages. In India, retail is on the way from unorganised sector to organised, which boosts the book-trade to gaining ground and snapping up. The book retailing is growing at 15 to 18 per cent annually. Several established publishers in India have been establishing new stores across the country,

reaching out even small towns in search of new market for better distribution and drive their sale. Readers want to acquire a good book, reasonably priced, and available at a bookshop conveniently reachable.

High price of the book is a major pinch to readers and a major deterrent for sale of the book; although publishers argue that as compared to other stuff, prices of books have not heightened that much. However, some publishers have been slashing price of their publications to catch 'mass market'. And this step has been showing result.

'The Inscrutable Americans' (Anurag Mathur, Rupa), continues to be best seller. Again, 'Five Point Someone' by Chetan Bhagat, has sold out a lakh copies. Piracy is a major problem of the publishers, which is causing loss of nearly 50 per cent of their sale in respect of popular books. The organised retail will help contrive this loss.

Book Trade has now become global. To develop and enhance

The present day reader, burdened with the financial concerns and apprehensions; and the family stresses and strains, is now more health-conscious and prefer yoga, health-management and self-improvement books. This is why Dale Carnegie, Deepak Chopra, Shiv Khera and Shri Ravi Shankar are picked up to make life interesting, meaningful and happy.

its trade, the Indian book Industry has to transform itself inwardly. Intrinsically this industry is 'insular' in character, detached from market beyond the country. It is more or less confined to the country's needs alone.

To compete with the multinational companies entering into Indian market, Indian publishing has to improve the quality of the product in terms of paper, typeface illustrations and designing of the books. And all this needs no big money-investment; rather it is done a little intelligently and craftily.

Developments on the web are not going to announce demise of books. Not, really. Because the paper fonts, ink, attractive illustrations and designs all in one, make the object delightfully

pleasing. It is so because even today the book is a favourite item for decoration in our studies and drawing rooms.

Further, there has been a great, dignified tradition, centuries old, attached to printed books, which "net-driven tech" cannot replace and demolish. It can only be source of information and supplement it. More reviews in dailies and the book-talk on TV creates hype and curiosity about the titles and help bring the book and people together.

Printed word goes far ahead of the 'psychedelic charm' of the audio visual. Truly going through a book one derives aesthetic taste. The Reader is not going to hand down such an object. Book, in print, will survive.

Unity of Mind for Unity of Mankind

Lt. Col. R. K. Langar

A sound mind can embrace with equal ease
all great things as well as small.

Unity is life, its negation death. This unity is achieved through unity of minds. It is the mind that perceives and creates the world around. Beauty, love, compassion, benevolence, reason and order are the various positive conceptions associated with our mind. A sound mind can embrace with equal ease all great things as well as small.

Unity is strength is a well known adage. Bahauallah, founder of the Baha'i faith says so powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth. Religion of God is for love and unity. You are fruits of one tree and leaves of one branch.

No two minds think alike. They are more different than two

faces. These differences become obstacles that create problems in unity of minds. Some major differences are due to ethnic groupism, regional fundamentalism, local loyalties, lack of education and average state of mental disposition.

People who make no effort to expand the process of thinking and improve their level of awareness, generally have a closed mind, not receptive to new ideas. Men with closed minds may get together, but they will remain under their respective style and resist any penetration from without.

Mind is not only intellect, it is more intuitive than logical. Mind needs fresh ideas for growth. Therefore, it is essential

Mind needs fresh ideas for growth. Therefore, it is essential that our minds remain open to the views and suggestions from others.

that our minds remain open to the views and suggestions from others.

Unity is best achieved when the minds are elevated. At an average level of our consciousness, all the differences between two minds get unduly enlarged and distorted. Higher the mind better is its adaptability to unite with others. Unity of mind requires soaring above the apparent differences. He sees farthest who ascends highest.

For unity of mind we do not have to eliminate differences. We have to live with them and achieve unity and not uniformity. Uniformity is impossible as it goes against the creator's plan. In any case differences are not evil. Differences are blessing as long we respect and accept them. They create intellectual challenge. Differences activate

mind and accelerate the process of thinking which leads to intellectual development.

Unity of mind brings man closer to man and this human nearness helps develop love, peace and brotherhood between them. Unity of mind and heart leads to unity of family, unity of family to unity in society and social life. Unity among all people in society achieves unity of country and unity among countries lead to unity and peace among the nations, resulting in allround socio-economic development, ultimately leading to human unity which is a must if we have to progress at individual, societal, national and international levels.

Unity of mind plays an important role in the world of religions. There can be no peace amongst nations without peace among religions and there can be no peace among religions unless we accept all religions and respect them as we respect our own. Living beyond one's own religion is the way to unity among religions. Peace among

religions is possible when we have dialogue among religions. In dialogue, we listen to others' view points and by doing so create meeting points between us and others.

Dialogue among religions fosters mutual respect and deeper understanding of other faiths. Listening provides opportunities for unity of mind and if there is unity in minds in the world of religions, it generates spiritual strength by bridging gaps between religions with understanding, love and compassion. There shall always be unity at the spiritual level.

India is a multi-religious, multilingual and multicultural country. Indians have a highly developed regional affiliation which creates obstacle for national unity.

The pluralistic set up of Indian society poses challenge in unity of ideas. Whatever may be the pitfall, India still has the capacity to overcome the differences due to her being firmly anchored on spiritual foundation.

India is a multi-religions, multilingual and multicultural country. Indians have a highly developed regional affiliation which creates obstacle for national unity. The pluralistic set up of Indian society poses challenge in unity of ideas.

India can generate moral and spiritual empowerment largely due to the valued teaching of holy scriptures and saints which India has produced.

The moral fibre of our country has to be strengthened by moral and spiritual empowerment which can unite India into one wholesome entity. When individuals develop elevated consciousness their ego vanishes and the mind acquires receptivity to new ideas.

This is how closed mind becomes an open mind. Unity of minds is not possible when we are attached to our own thoughts or view point since then we force our views on others without

listening to them. Even if we are convinced about our own view points, we should remain open to others suggestions.

Unity of minds is one subject which needs immediate attention. India today looks divided as people prefer to stay within their own circles. Such attitude hampers national integration. We must understand that nation is bigger than the individual and party and the world of nations is bigger than ones own nation. Unity of mind and heart when sincerely imbibed will make India strong and powerful which would help it to generate its rich spiritual heritage to influence the world to unite people all over the globe.

Our scriptures proclaim that world is one family. We must live up to this dictum by expanding

our thinking process to unite people not only in India but across the whole world.

We have to educate ourselves and teach our students that we are a part of common existence and as such must achieve unity to gain strength. The well-being of mankind cannot be attained unless and until we are firmly established in unity of mind. Unity of mind is unity in diversity. With a spiritual outlook founded on sound morality, we discover that all diversities are related to one another like waves in one mass of water in an ocean.

A vedic hymn runs like this: Let your mind be all of one accord. One and the same be your resolve; united be the thought of all that all may agree. Let our minds unite together in quest of knowledge.

Read 'Vedic Records on Early Aryans' by L. N. Renu & 'Indian Ancestors of Vedic Aryans' by L. N. Renu. Also read "Musings on The Bhagwad Gita" by Nehal Chand Vaish. Published by Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Kulapati Munshi Marg, Mumbai-400 007.

Dr. Bach Flower Remedies of England – III

V. Krishnamurthy

In the beginning, I said that Bach Remedies cover all problems concerning our life on earth. Let us now see how Bach Remedies approach the social evil 'hijacking'.

A plane is hijacked in midair. If a passenger has a set of these remedies, he may take two pills of the remedy *Rock Water*. The hijacker would release that person alone. Of course, all those in that aircraft whosoever takes a dose of Rock Water would be released. Rock Water makes us so humane that the inhuman attitude in the mind of the hijacker disappears so far as the person (who had taken the (remedy) is concerned.

It is said that marriages are made in heaven. If that be so, only one right and suitable boy

should knock the door of the girl and also sufficient money should flow in automatically because it is arranged by heaven. But in practice we do not see this. This is because we interfere with the work of heaven in respect of wedding. If two drivers attempt to drive a vehicle at one and the same time, what would happen? Only accident. That is why we have dowry death etc. etc.

In the case of girl's parents who have taken the remedy *Sweet Chestnut* for a month or so, a decent and good boy appears on the scene and also sufficient money flows in.

A newcomer to the subject may think that these remedies are for 'pains' and 'aches'. But it is much more than that. To enable you to understand the scope of

the subject we would put a question before the readers: "What is the use of encyclopaedias?" You may reply that it is for 'reference' etc.

But it is not so. You need textbooks for study to get a degree in your hands. After this when you enter your profession, be it psychology, a medical practice or any other field, to go up the ladder, you work in various organisations, gain experience, than work under so-called seniors and experts, attend seminars and workshops etc. May be, after 15-30 years, you too may or may not go to the top:

But there is a sure short cut to go up the ladder in just 1-2 years time. It is the study of encyclopaedia. If any one has it as a textbook, you too can go to the top and no one can excel you in your field.

You may ask me as to how I came to know about the correct use of encyclopaedias? Here comes in Bach Flower Remedies. I came to know about the role of encyclopaedias while studying

the Bach Remedy *Cerato*.

Your knowledge about worldly things becomes exact, accurate and crystal clear with Bach Remedies.

Let us now see some cases to know how Bach Remedies system is superior to all other existing medical systems.

Our body may be affected by (a) diseases arising inside our body; or (b) caused by external forces (serious accidents, burns & scalds, poison & poison-bites, electric shock).

The latter is known as 'trauma' in medical parlance.

In medical emergencies arising from traumatic causes where life is in danger, there is no need for first aid, rushing the victim to a hospital etc. etc. Just put two pills of the Bach remedy called *Rescue Remedy* into the mouth of the victim. In less than a minute's time.

(i) bleeding, if any, stops, without any need to put a bandage, however long or deep the cut may be;

(ii) pain, swelling etc. is reduced to minimum;

(iii) if unconscious and the body has become icecold, pulse/breath imperceptible, these are cured in just a minute, so that he gets up and walks home as if nothing has happened (excepting, of course, fractures.)-the more danger to life, the quicker the remedy acts;

(iv) in case of chemical and other poison and poison-bites, scorpion sting, snake-bite etc. the poison gets neutralised in no time;

(v) in the case of burns and scalds not only the burning pain comes down in less than a minute but also, simultaneously, all after effects are prevented.

But that is not the case with medical systems known till date. After extensive burns if

the victim goes to any qualified and registered medical practitioner, the latter has no medicine to prevent the after-effects of burns. At the most he would order 'rest cure', bleb formation taking place after a few days, discolouration of skin and disfiguration of the part by thickening of tissues etc.

(vi) But Rescue Remedy, given by mighty, Nature not only acts as a mere first aid in trauma but also completely cures the patient (even before the time required to reach him to a hospital) so that no other treatment is required in most cases (fractures excepted).

(vii) Won't you like to keep a phial of Rescue Remedy in your home?

(Concluded)

SWEET THOUGHT

Sri Krishna Sweets

PRODUCERS OF PURE GHEE SWEETS

AMONG THE GREAT SEERS I AM BHARGU,
OF THE WORDS I AM THE
MONOSYLLABLE 'OM'; I AM THE
SACRIFICE OF THE CONSTANT
REPETITION OF THE LORD'S NAME; AND
OF THE IMMOVABLES, THE HIMALAYA.

- Bhagavad Gita

Music Therapy for Alzheimer Patients

T. V. Sairam

While medication is the most prevalent of interventions, with its accompanying side-effects, alternative approaches such as music therapy has also been tried and tested.

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is becoming tragically common. Approximately 100,000 victims die and 360,000 new cases of Alzheimer's disease are diagnosed each year. The disease is a progressive, irreversible brain disorder with no known cause or cure. It attacks and slowly steals the minds of its victims. Symptoms of the disease include memory loss, confusion, impaired judgment, personality changes, disorientation, and loss of language skills.

Although, currently, there is no definitive cure for AD, several

treatment interventions have been tried to manage, decrease, and prevent aggressiveness and agitation in people with Alzheimer's disease. While medication is the most prevalent of interventions, with its accompanying side-effects, alternative approaches such as music therapy has also been tried and tested. This has become an increasingly popular intervention strategy, particularly for patients in nursing homes who display disruptive behaviours .

The benefits of music therapy is increasingly acknowledged in recent literature. Most of the



Mirabai

studies on the effects of music therapy emphasise its therapeutic role in decreasing agitated behaviours. Music also promotes feelings of acceptance and belonging: playing favourite songs is often used to calm down anxious AD patients .

In a study conducted by Clark, Lipe, & Bilbrey (1998) employing music preferred by the patients, the researchers observed that there was decreasing occurrence of aggressive behaviour among

Alzheimer patients. Particularly the disruptive behaviour during bathing, commonly reported by the nursing staff to be the most problematic, was found to be decreasing, when recorded selections of preferred music were played. Care-givers noticed that, during the music condition, patients showed improvements in mood, evidenced by an increase in smiling, dancing, and clapping to the music. Also, some were reported as being more calm and cooperative during the bathing routine.

Brotons & Pickett-Cooper (1996) investigated the impact of live music therapy in agitation behaviour of Alzheimer's disease patients before, during, and after the music intervention. Twenty subjects, aged 70-96, from four nursing homes, were used for the analysis. The music therapy session included different musical activities designed according to the subjects' functioning ability (e.g. singing, dancing, playing musical games or instruments). Results indicated that subjects

were significantly less agitated during and after music therapy than before. Movements and behaviours that were seen as unintentional and uncontrollable before music therapy now seemed more purposeful, more rhythmical, as though they were moving with the music. Subjects appeared to gain some control over these actions. In addition, informal reports from staff proposed that this decrease in agitation continued for the rest of the afternoon and evening.

A study by Rugneskog *et al.* (1996) showed that AD patients ate more when music was played; music also resulted in the subjects eating by themselves more often. There was a significant fall in irritability, anxiety, and depression.

Lindenmuth *et al.* (1992)

Although AD causes progressive brain deterioration, musical activity can be modified for even the most severely demented patients.

found that music increased the number of hours of productive sleep in people with AD. Although Forbes rated this investigation as weak, the results remain assuring.

The recent studies indicate that music in nursing homes has been found to be very important. Music therapy resulted in increased social interaction of residents with Alzheimer's disease. Subjects continued to respond to music therapy even as the disease progressed.

In one group, singing promoted more functional, social and physical behaviours than previously noted. Music provides a means of creative self-expression, non-verbal communication, memory, and most importantly, lets the group have fun. Alzheimer's disease patients can continue to take part in organised music activities, such as simple drumming, even though they exhibit deteriorating levels of functioning; also, Alzheimer's sufferers may be able to retain musical perception, and learn new information when

Music provides a means of creative self-expression, non-verbal communication, memory, and most importantly, lets the group have fun.

presented in a musical context. Hence, music may offer an alternative way of communicating for people with AD, when their ability to express and interpret language has significantly declined.

Studies also suggest that music therapy may be a creative and effective behavioural intervention in the management of disruptive behaviours displayed by people with Alzheimer's disease. Although AD causes progressive brain deterioration, musical activity

can be modified for even the most severely demented patients. Because of the extreme variability among AD patients, their reactions to intervention strategies may be different. As a result, it is important to individualise these approaches according to the patients' personal needs.

Further research is needed in order to understand, how music therapy can work to enhance the lives of people with dementia. However, behavioural interventions, such as music therapy, have "great potential" for improving the quality of life and well-being of both family caregivers and patients. Music can help an elderly individual grow with greater self-esteem and less loneliness.

SWEET THOUGHT

Sri Krishna Sweets

PRODUCERS OF PURE GHEE SWEETS

OF ALL TREES I AM ASVATTHA (THE HOLY FIG TREE); AMONG THE CELESTIAL SAGES, NARADA; AMONG THE GANDHARVAS (CELESTIAL SONGSTERS), CITRARATHA; AMONG THE SIDDHAS (THE PERFECT), THE SAGE KAPILA.

- Bhagavad Gita

Holistic Healthy Living

A. Balakrishna

Living a healthy life is grossly misconstrued in modern society as mere survival, being free from disease, instead of living a life completely, purely, perfectly, integrated and vitalised full being. As a matter of fact, life should holistically be physically fit, mentally strong, emotionally sound and spiritually divinised.

Physical wellbeing means the ability of enjoying life to the fullest which is possible only when an individual health needs are fulfilled, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Physical health is the embodiment of healthy food, moderate exercise, pure mind and gross energy.

As far as food is concerned, it should be quantitatively and qualitatively nutritious, balanced, as per the needs of a body constitution, age, weight, profession and season, etc.

By quantitatively is meant the number of kilocalories, that is, an amount of heat required for as physical energy, ranging from 2,500 kilocalories to 10,000 kilocalories. The sources of energy can be drawn from contents of food, namely, carbohydrates (cereals & grains); fats (animal and veg); proteins (pulses, non-veg. milk, egg); in the percentage of 40-60; 20-30; 10-12 respectively as macronutrients and vitamins (A,B,C,D,E,K), minerals (sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron and copper) from vegetables and fruits, as micro nutrients.

Besides fresh food, clean water, pure air, sound sleep with utmost hygienic habits are indispensable. The proportion of foods, as indicated, varies from person to person, according to physical body type, office-goer, labourer, sports person, etc.

The estimation of food in the

above values is essential for good organic growth and developmental physiological functions and improvement of power of immunity for maintenance of better health and vitality. The development of physical health calls for regular exercise to power up the functioning of organic systems of the body to its potential with better physiological improvement of musculo-skeletal, cardio-respiratory, harmo-neural, digico-excretory systems to withstand the demands of life's activities.

The lack of regular exercise leads to weakening and wasting of physical efficiency of body and mind.

So, the principle of regular use of body develops and disuse atrophy, inviting diseases, decay

The development of physical health calls for regular exercise to power up the functioning of organic systems of the body to its potential with better physiological improvement of musculo-skeletal, cardio-respiratory, harmo-neural, digico-excretory systems to withstand the demands of life's activities. The lack of regular exercise leads to weakening and wasting of physical efficiency of body and mind.

and death. Therefore, the necessity of regular exercise. It is essential to follow up with necessary rest after stressful load of exercises and sufficient sleep during night time for recuperation of day's wear and tear of tissues and recovering of energy matter.

The second important area of comprehensive health is the mental health, a trained mind, to meet challenges of life squarely without giving scope for perturbation by losing cool of head. Life is a field of psyche of opposites of excitation, anxiety, depression, worry, anger, fear with resultant effect of pleasure – pain, success – failure, happiness – sorrow, love – hatred, hope – despair. The upside down feelings should be tried to weigh both the opposite

situations with the same scale to allow the brain chemistry normal and normal wave length, rhythm which eliminate mental tension and maintain body – brain harmony through bio-feedback mechanism, or else, disturb state of mind causing abnormal brain waves which could develop into psychosomatic diseases like heart attack, blood-pressure, stroke, asthma, ulcer, arthritis.

Therefore, the mind's disciplining, as pro-friendly development of attitudinal changes of positivity in the life's playfields is a must. At the same time, the ups and downs in life should be treated with equanimity of vision for upkeeping of mental and emotional health. Emotional health is the balancing of mind against circumstances of high and low feelings of mind and thoughts of intellect.

In such a nature of stable mind and intellect of an individual is never subjected to high and low profile of life, instead keep oneself happy with the faith in the power of God's

grace. All the positive habits in life, in respect of mental and emotional health, one can keep doctor at bay and enjoy life to the fullest.

Above all, the spiritual health is very significant in one's life in the realisation of soul (individual conscious) and further attainment of MOKSHA which should be mode of life in an individual by upholding the DHARMA in all the circumstances of testing time during an individual's life.

The observation of Purush Artha rules and regulations in one's life of DHARMA, ARTHA, KAMA AND MOKSHA can liberate oneself from the cycle of birth and death of PAPA KARMA.

In modern society people mostly indulge in worldly pursuits of name, fame, power, wealth, property and blow up with egoistic nature, instead of identifying oneself with the soul and supreme soul, when all the worldly possessions are property of the God.

So long as oneself does not

free from identifying with body, mind and intellect suffer from ignorance, morbidity and mortality carrying all VASANAS from one birth to the succeeding births. In order to be bereft from hell life, under cycle of birth and death, one should emulate divinely and spiritual qualities of passion of love, devotion, kindness, selfless actions and strive for enlightenment of soul to enter into the gates of immortality.

All such social & divine traits are possible when one leads life with selflessness, egolessness, desirelessness, attachmentless, prejudicelessness, hatelessness, envylessness in every day life by not being influenced by "MAYA", an illusion of mind which always try to pull oneself away from ideal practices of Satvik nature, a noble and divine personality, by turning the mind and looking inward, instead outward for seeking spiritual health.

After development of spiritual practises of Bhakti –

Yog (Devotion), Karma – Yoga (selfless action) and Jnan – Yoga (God centric), one can follow meditative practice (Raja – Yoga), I order to place individual soul in Supreme Soul detaching oneself from sensual gratification, & qualify oneself experience truth (inner peace, happiness and bliss) and attain liberation, the very goal of life of merging individual conscious with supreme conscious, just like a river dissolving into the sea.

The dictum, "SHARIRAMADYAM KHALU DHARMA SADHANAM" is an apt commandment of fulfilling all Dharmas through bodily spiritual actions. Thus, a SADHAK can lead pure, perfect, peaceful life and get blessed healthy death of no return.

Hence, the physical health, mental health, spiritual health are all complimentary to one another in one's life, especially spiritual Health is a ladder for transcendental truth experience (Truth from untruth, light from ignorance and immortality from mortality) – MOKSHA.

Swadhyaya
Valmiki Ramayana



अग्निष्टोमोऽश्वमेधश्च यज्ञो बहुसुवर्णकः ।
राजसूयस्तथा यज्ञो गोमेधो वैष्णवस्तथा ॥

*agnishtomo'shvamedhashcha yajno bahuvarnakah
raajasoooyastathaa yajno gomedho vaishnavastathaa*

(Shukracharya speaks to Ravana:-) Your son (Meghanada) has performed these six sacrifices: Agnishtoma, Ashvamedha, Bahusuvarnaka, Rajasuya, Gomedha and Vaishnava sacrifice.

माहेश्वर प्रवृत्ते तु यज्ञे पुम्भिः सुदुर्लभे ।
वरांस्ते लब्धवान्पुत्रः साक्षात् यशुपतेरिह ॥

*maaheshvare pravritte tu yajne pumbhih sudurlabhe
varaamste labdhavaanputrah saakshaat pashupateriha*

When your son commenced the Mahesvara Yajna, which is actually extremely difficult for people to perform successfully, Lord Pashupati himself offered different boons to your son.

कामगं स्यन्दनं दिव्यमन्तरिक्षचरं ध्रुवम् ।
मयां च तामसीं नाम यया संपद्यते तमः ॥

*kaamagam syandanam divyamantarikshacharam dhruvam
maayaam cha taamaseem naama yayaa sampadyate tamah*

The articles and prowess received in boons included a long-lasting heavenly aerial car which moves in the sky as per the wish of its master; and also magical prowess called Tamasi Maya which can spread darkness, when needed.

एतया किल संग्रामे मायया राक्षसेश्वर ।
प्रयुद्धस्य गतिः शक्या न हि ज्ञातुं सुरासुरैः ॥

*etayaa kila sangraame maayayaa raakshaseshvara
prayuddhasya gatih shaktyaa na hi jnaatum suraasuraih*

O Master of demons! By means of this prowess, the movement of the warrior possessing this formula, cannot be known to either gods or demons.

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BHAVAN'S JOURNAL



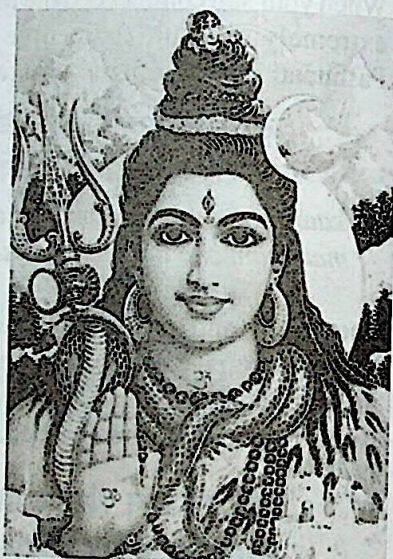
Once Upon A Time...

By God's Anger

Mangalam Ramaswami

According to popular belief, Shaktism began in ancient Kamarupa by which name the present northeastern states of Assam, Manipur etc., were then called. In Kamakhya there was Shakti and Tantric worship (occultism) during the medieval period. The main centre of this faith was the Kamakhya temple in Assam.

Puranic legends indicate that the temple was built by gods themselves with the help of the divine architect, Vishwakarma. The legends associated with the name, Kamarupa and the origin of Kamakhya are found in Kalika Purana. Sati, the consort of Lord Shiva was humiliated by her father, Daksha, by not inviting her husband Shiva for Maha Yagna and unable to bear the humiliation she sat down in a yogic posture and ended her life.



Lord Shiva

Lord Shiva was immensely grieved by his beloved's demise. Angry Shiva destroyed Daksha's Yagna and picking up Sati's dead body on his shoulders began wandering everywhere to the consternation of even the Gods.

Brahma and other Gods were alarmed and approached Lord

Vishnu for his advice. Vishnu hurled his Sudarshana Chakra and severed the body of Sati to pieces. The genitals of Sati fell on a hill situated in Pratiyogit, present Assam, and then turned blue to be known as Neelachal.

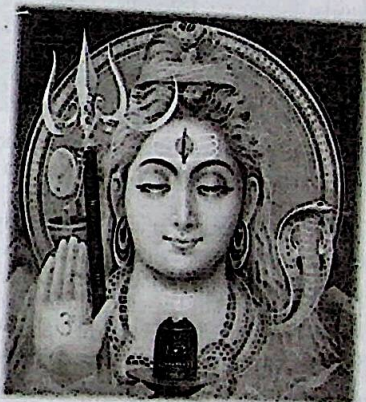
Lord Shiva sat down in meditation. As the Gods wanted to break his penance, they sent the God of Love, Kamadeva, to use his charms to disrupt Lord Shiva's penance. Lord Shiva got furious with Kamadeva and burnt him to ashes by just glancing at him with his third eye.

Kamadeva's wife Ratidevi rushed to the irate Shiva and appealed for forgiveness. Shiva relented and brought Kamadeva back to life though not in his physical form. Following the appeal by Ratidevi, Shiva agreed to restore Kamadeva to his original form if a temple was immediately constructed on the hill where Sati's limbs had fallen.

Thus a temple was constructed on the Neelachal hill and it was named "Kamakhya". The ancient Pragjyotisha, where the temple was built and the hill

came to be known as 'Kamarupa' as Kamadeva got his life back at this place.

Kamarupa and Kamakhya are referred to as "Kamarupa - Kamakhya" as the place and temple where it is situated are inseparable. The kings of Kamarupa always patronised this premier centre of Shakti worship. The Shakti cult, it is believed, spread to the rest of India from Kamarupa.



The first reference to Kamarupa (Ka-ma-ru-po) is also found in the travelogue of the Chinese traveller, Hiuen-Tsang, who visited the province at the invitation of King Bhaskara Barmana.

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State's Primary Task

T. D. Jagadesan

The main function of a State is to provide basic needs, food, shelter, health and security to the people and also raise their quality of life. Since the 1970s, the "basic need" concept has been a dominating factor in the debates on development activities which gained its first international recognition under the Declaration of COCOYOC as a result of a symposium organised by the United National Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). However, the United Nations Charter of 1948 had also emphasised certain rights basic to human needs.

These are right to work, free choice of employment and protection against unemployment and right to standard of living adequate for

the health and well-being of individual and family including food, clothing, housing, medical care and free education at the elementary and fundamental stages. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has been insisting on incorporating the basic needs strategy in the development plans for developing countries.

The philosophy of "basic needs" in India can be traced to early 1960s when the Planning Commission studied the problem of poverty alleviation in terms of providing at least a "minimum level of living" for the entire population. However, the "basic need" concept got adequately reflected in the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) document.

The Plan document envisaged a minimum needs programme

which included elementary education, adult education, rural health, nutrition, rural water supply and housing, improvement of urban slums, rural roads and electrification.

Customarily, poverty stands as a culprit at the back of all socio-economic evils such as illiteracy, ill-health, malnutrition etc., and eradication of poverty is fundamental to eradication of socio-economic evils.

The pressure of poverty is more felt in rural areas, as compared to urban areas and more pervasive in the case of scheduled castes and schedule tribes as compared to general castes. The World Bank has mentioned "the poverty imposes an oppressive weight on India, especially in rural areas, where almost three out of four Indians and 77 per cent of poor live".

The Planning Commission's poverty data reveals that the poverty ratio was significantly reduced in Andhra Pradesh from 31.7 per cent in (1987-88) to 10.5 in 1999-2000. Whereas, in Bihar, it has risen from 40.8 per cent in

(1987-88) to 44 per cent in 1999-2000. In the same vein, poverty ratio in Orissa has remained more or less stagnant, at as high as 47 per cent.

Even after three decades of the implementation of Minimum Needs Programme (MNPS) 1974, a colossal percentage of rural population, particularly living in economically weaker States of Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal, are devoid of basic needs. Besides these inevitable basic needs, other needs, which are basic to minimum levels of livings, are elementary and primary education, primary health care, nutrition, sanitation, safe drinking water, roads and electricity.

The preamble of the Constitution of the World Health Organisation states that "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition. The government,

in our country, has been making honest endeavours to provide primary health care services to its countryside population through a chain of health centres such as sub-centres, primary health centres (PHCs) and community health centres (CHCs).

These centres lack adequate manpower, medicines, equipment and hygiene. Moreover, the health and health-related personnel are not adequately motivated to work in rural areas, resulting in absenteeism, irregularities and shorter house working just to do formality in many cases.

As a result, mortalities are occurring in good numbers in rural areas as compared to the urban areas.

Rural roads and electricity are the other two important basic needs to promote quality of life in rural areas. Construction of all-weather roads and connecting village inner roads to the main road would hasten rural communication of agriculture and industry, and access to education and health care.

Despite best efforts of the

government and launching of many rural development programmes and more recently the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY), many villages are not connected with the main road. Even if constructed, many of them are in bad condition with innumerable pits. Road is fundamental and visible indicator of rural progress.

It is the fundamental duty of the nation as well as of the states to ensure basic needs to its people. Despite efforts of the government through launching of minimum programme, a large percentage of households in states are devoid of one of the other basic needs.

Weak implementation and monitoring strategies with faulty targeting of beneficiaries, corruption, nepotism and poor political and administrative will, lack of good governance, feeble local-self government and altruistic civil society are a few among many factors responsible for the poor performance in ensuring basic needs to people in different states.

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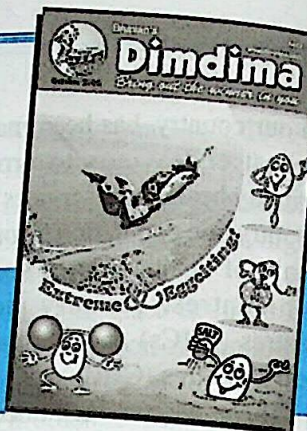
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World of Books

Magisterial But Incomplete

Devdatt P. Dubhashi

Amartya Sen: *The Argumentative Indian*
Allen Lane 2005.

This is a collection of essays written over the last decade on Indian history, culture and identity. With gentle wisdom, scholarly erudition and relentless logic, Sen comprehensively demolishes many stereotypes, misconceptions and misrepresentations—both Indian and Western. He also recalls the best from Indian (and other) culture and tradition with lessons that the contemporary world would do well to digest.

As the title indicates, the unifying strand that runs through all the essays, is that the well-known Indian trait of being loquacious is deeply-rooted in a tradition of discussion and debate that has profoundly

shaped India's philosophy, culture and civilisation.

This is illustrated in the essays by many concrete examples, ranging from the Vedas and Upanishads, to Asoka and Akbar. Sen expresses the hope that this tradition of informed debate could form the bedrock of modern Indian democracy.

This is bound to strike one as rather fanciful, especially witnessing the action packed proceedings in our Parliament and Assemblies, and the standard fare of what passes for debate on TV and the media.

The essays in Part One under the rubric of "Voice and Heterodoxy" argue passionately that Indian thought and culture has had diverse sources and has been enriched by many interactions and cultures from the outside world. These essays

have as one of their basic goals, to rescue Indian culture and thought from the narrow sectarian boundaries that recent trends in India, notably the "Hindutva" movement, have tried to shoehorn it into. Indian civilisation is at root Hindu, it is claimed, it is home-grown and predates all other civilisations. One by one, Sen dismantles these specious claims.

In a wonderful chapter on "India through its Calendars" (which contains many other insights), Sen demonstrates that the Kaliyuga calendar is one of several others that were in use in India at various points of time, and does not date back as far back as claimed.

The unifying strand that runs through all the essays, is that the well-known Indian trait of being loquacious is deeply-rooted in a tradition of discussion and debate that has profoundly shaped India's philosophy, culture and civilisation.

The Vedas are a magnificent repository of literature and philosophy, but there is not much to "Vedic mathematics". The true world beating achievements of Indian science date much later to Aryabhata and his disciples, who engaged in much give-and-take with the world.

By the time Sen is done, the "Hindutva" position is well and truly in tatters. "Hindutva" has a formidable opponent in Sen – in stark contrast to their almost total ignorance of Indian culture, here is a scholar of Sanskrit whose first-hand mastery ranges over all the classic literature.

Sen believes that the tradition of reasoned discussion and debate is vital to maintaining the healthy tolerant traditions on which the country was founded. He admits to being an unreconstructed secularist but points out that within this framework, there can be many different interpretations respecting basic symmetry to all religions, ranging from a strict separation of state and religion (the French model) to an

equidistance from all religions (the Indian position in practice).

In Part Two titled "Culture and Communication", Sen discusses amusing but instructive examples of both communication and miscommunication between India and the world.

The Iranian scholar Alberuni visited India in the eleventh century. He mastered Sanskrit, studied Indian science and mathematics and wrote a very informative book on India.

In stark contrast, the British historian James Mill in his book published in 1867, dismissed India as barbaric and uncivilised before the arrival of the British. In the preface, he proudly declared that he had not learnt a single Indian language and never left the shores of England! We may not find such crude supremacist views displayed openly today, but every once in a while, the sentiments hidden shallowly beneath the surface pop up – as for example, when Robert Skidelsky in a recent review in the prestigious and liberal *New York Review of*



Tagore

Books, discussing the impact of China on the world today, informs us that China is just "a culture, not a civilisation".

In typical discussions of the east and the west, Sen notes, perceived contrasts are emphasised, rather than similarities. Thus, while the west is the seat of reason and rationalism, the east is all spiritualism and mysticism. Even if this might be espoused by well meaning romanticists as a favourable comparison with the west, Sen argues at length that it is nevertheless deeply mistaken.

He gives many examples of the long reach of reason and rationalism in the Indian tradition: scepticism and doubt in the Vedas, comparative analysis of different philosophies in learned treatises, and the world-leading, pioneering science and mathematics of Aryabhata.

Among modern examples, he has an essay on "Tagore and his India". Tagore was an amazingly multifaceted genius – poet, artist, philosopher – but also a true child of the enlightenment, placing reason above all else. It brings a smile to read that western intellectuals such as Yeats initially embraced him as the saviour of humanity, perhaps impressed by his sage-like looks and garb, only to drop him like a hot potato when he started preaching the supremacy of reason!

Another claim often heard is that liberty and freedom are inherently western concepts in contrast to "Asian values" of order and discipline. Sen clearly enjoys demolishing this nonsense. While Aristotle extolled freedom and liberty,

though not for women and slaves, Asoka championed the same values, but did not exclude women and slaves. If Kautilya stressed order and discipline, Plato's conception was much harsher. While Akbar was expousing religious tolerance in Agra in 1592, Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake in Europe in 1600.

Two essays in Part Three titled, "Politics and Protest", are particularly noteworthy. Euphoric claims are trumpeted these days about India's emergence as a superpower. The authors of such claims would do well to read the shocking facts highlighted by Sen: undernourishment is worse in India than many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. More than fifty years after independence, illiteracy rates are an amazing 40 % and the situation of primary education in rural areas is dismal. Hardly the stuff that superpowers are made of.

Another occasion for euphoric celebrations was Pokhran II, when India openly proclaimed its status as a nuclear

In the final chapter entitled, "The Indian Identity", Sen explores the theme of globalisation and its impact on India. He points out that globalisation is by no means a new phenomenon as much contemporary hype would have us believe.

power. Apart from the ethical aspects of this decision and the loss of the high moral ground, Sen makes complete mincemeat of the decision from a purely strategic point of view.

It resulted in the impositions of sanctions, it gave Pakistan the much sought after opportunity to test itself and allowed it to make claims of "parity" which it could not before.

Sen argues persuasively that the Bomb emboldened Pakistan in its Kargil misadventure and significantly reduced the military options Indian had in response. The essay was written before the recent Indo-US nuclear agreement, so the Bomb champions could lay claims to a full vindication of the decision, at least from a strategic point of view.

However, the US record on

respecting other countries' sovereignty is notorious, the agreement is already in some trouble, and we will have to wait for the eventual denouement.

The chapter is very persuasively argued, but unfortunately the effect is somewhat spoilt by Sen's outrageous claim that Bangladesh might well be the safest place to live in on the subcontinent!

In the final chapter entitled, "The Indian Identity", Sen explores the theme of globalisation and its impact on India. He points out that globalisation is by no means a new phenomenon as much contemporary hype would have us believe.

"Around 1000 CE, globalisation of science, technology and mathematics was changing the nature of the old

world ... even though typically in the opposite direction to what we see today". He also stresses that in itself, it is necessarily neither folly nor a virtue. He discusses at length the efforts of Jamshedji Tata to employ globalisation to India's advantage – by importing modern science and technology to establish India's industrial base, and setting up institutions of higher education such as the Indian Institute of Science.

Sen then turns to the so-called "anti-globalisation" protests starting with Seattle and continuing, most recently, in Hong Kong. He commends these protests for drawing attention to the problems of global inequality, injustice and disparities.

Distinguished mainstream economists have now started to speak out quite explicitly about the systemic features of the world economic system at the root of the problems, most notably former World bank Chief Economist and Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz. As a fellow Nobel prize winner and leading economist who, at the same time has first-hand knowledge and experience of third world problems and perspectives, Sen's silence is both remarkable and disappointing.



Akbar

But strangely, here his voice is very muted and his arguments lose their force. He blithely notes the problems, but makes no analysis of its causes. He remarks

that the slogans of the protestors are easy to refute – hardly remarkable since that is in the very nature of slogans. But he does not mention the vast and well-informed debates that range on these matters at the World Social Forum taking place annually for several years now – arguments that are not quite as easy to dismiss.

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Asoka and Akbar make repeated (and well deserved) appearances in defence of Sen's themes, but other examples would have made his case even more convincing (and also less

repetitive).

At several places, Sen is at pains to point out that for about a thousand years at a point in Indian history, it was Buddhism, not Hinduism that was the dominant religion. However, missing is the reason for its later eclipse and the eventual restoration of Hinduism as the predominant religion.

It is a remarkable chapter of Indian history that this transformation occurred without military conquest or state patronage. Rather it was the single-handed efforts of Sankaracharya who engaged in intellectual debates with the rival schools throughout the length and breadth of India and eventually triumphed over them.

That this most argumentative of Indians finds not even a mention in a footnote in the *Argumentative Indian* is puzzling. It will unfortunately give fodder to critics who accuse it of anti-Hindu bias. This is a final reason for reaching the verdict that the book is magisterial but still incomplete in important respects.

Books Just Received

1. Asmi - A reflection on the teachings of Gautam Buddha and Ramana Maharshi.

Author : Nagesh D. Sonde
Publisher : Nagesh D. Sonde
 318, Raheja Crest-3,
 Link Road, Andheri (W),
 Mumbai-400 053.

Pages : 10+194
Price : Rs. 300/-

2. Blind Current Collection of Poems

Poet : Prof. Keshab Chandra Dash
Publisher : Smt. Subhadra Dash
 'Shashirekha' Bhoodan
 Nagar, University Road,
 Puri-752 003 (Orissa).

Pages : 16+144
Price : Rs. 100/-

3. Your Words Our Path (compilation of writings of Dr. Jayadeva Yogendra)

Author : Dr. Jayadeva
Publisher : The Yoga Institute
 Dr. Yogendra Marg,
 Prabhat Colony,
 Santacruz (E),
 Mumbai-400 055.

Pages : 70
Price : Rs. 50/-

4. The Freedom for Human Kingdom

Author : S. Gulzar Ahmed

Publisher : S. Gulzar Ahmed
 No. 54/2, 28th Main,
 9th Block, Jayanagar,
 Bangalore-560 069.

Pages : 240
Price : Rs. 125/-

5. The Philosophy of the Vallabha School of Vedanta.

Author : K. Narain
Publisher : Indological Research
 Centre, B 34/115,
 Sukulpura Durgakund,
 Varanasi-221 010.

Pages : 14+466
Price : Rs. 495/-

6. The Fundamentals of Advaita Vedanta

Author : K. Narain
Publisher : Indological Research
 Centre, B 34/115,
 Sukulpura Durgakund,
 Varanasi-221 010.

Pages : 10 + 312
Price : Rs. 395/-

7. Sanatana Dharma

Author : Dr. G. R. S. Rao
Publisher : Bharadwaja Spiritual
 Trust, Manasarovar,
 648, Naveen Nagar,
 Hyderabad-500 004.
 (A.P.)

Pages : 94
Price : Rs. 101/-

Readers Write

Prayer Page

Sir,-I am one of the earliest life members and a subscriber of Bhavan's Journal, the only publication that keeps the Bhaarateeya Samskriti and Indian ethos aloft. The quotes in *Samskritam* and other *Bhaarateeya Bhaasha* used to adorn the opening page with good translations and transliterations. The Holy and Wise quotes can be there, yet Sanskrit *slokas* from scriptures has been a part and parcel of Bhavan's publications. Please do not eschew that in the name of secularism.

Our Sanaathanadharma is the right kind way of life humans should adopt. please bring back those quotes in Devanagari scripts.

—V. P. Dhananjayan
Bharatakalanjali

The Perfect Diet

Sir,-It has been established WHO, scientists and medical

authorities throughout the world that a balanced vegetarian diet is ideal for good health as it contains sufficient quantity of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and essential minerals (with iron and omega 3).

The world famous wrestler Gama, was a pure vegetarian. Likewise, many Olympic celebrities are vegetarian like Carl Lewis, the winner of nine Olympic gold medals, Robert DiCostella, the Olympic marathon champion, Paavo Nurmi, the "Flying Finn" with 20 records in distance running and nine Olympic medals, Chris Campbell, the world wrestling champion in 1981, Roy Hilligan, "Mr. America", Stan Price, the world record holder for the bench press. Milk together with plenty of fruits and vegetables and reasonable quantity of cereals and pulses with proper exercise and a non-alcoholic and non-

smoking vegetarian lifestyle is conducive to a very long and healthy life, as is personally experienced by me who has not fallen sick for the last several decades.

Besides, stress and tension can be avoided by having equanimity and positive attitude with lots of love and service for the welfare of others.

—*R. N. Lakhotia*
New Delhi

Inspiring

Sir,—Let me congratulate you

for widening the scope of the journal and suitably incorporating write ups on issues other than religion alone. The recent few issues were very informative and inspiring, especially the ones on absolute sciences and the ones like the Nobel Prizes etc. The editorial on the eve of the New Year was very inspiring; we look forward to the next issues to be the same, versatile and diversified.

—*Vibhuti Kant*
Jaipur

Appeal

11 years old Nitesh B. Rathod, is suffering from Cholestatic liver disease for the last four years. He was treated in Hinduja Hospital and Jaslok Hospital. The family has already spent Rs. 2,50,000/- for his treatment so far. He has now been advised a living related liver transplant by Dr. Samir R. Shah, Consultant Gastroenterologist and the estimated expenses is Rs. 6 lakhs. The boy's mother is donating part of her liver to him.

His father, Mr. Bharat R. Rathod is the only earning member in the family. The father has approached charitable institutions and individuals for medical assistance. Cheques and D/Ds may be drawn in favour of "Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre" and sent to Ms. Rituparna Basu Choudhury, Medical Social Worker, Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre, 15, Dr. G. Deshmukh Marg, Mumbai – 400 026. (Telephone No. (022) 56573333).

Shraddhanjali

to A. P. Achyuthan

With deep sorrow we record the death of our dear colleague, Shri A. P. Achyuthan, in Hyderabad on January 28, 2006. He was 77. He died in sleep. He leaves behind his wife Kamalam, two sons (Jayakrishnan & Babu Badrinath), two daughters (Vanaja & Sheela), sons-in-law Sudarshanan & Sekhar and daughters-in-law Beena & Bindu.

Shri Achyuthan was always a happy man. By dint of his sincere and dedicated work and amiable and cheerful nature he endeared himself to all of his colleagues. He had put 42 years of service.

He joined the Bhavan 1954. When the *Bhavan's Journal*

started in August 1954, he was working in the Bhavan's library. As there was a vacancy for an assistant in the Circulation Department, he got transferred to that department and joined duty on 1st September, 1954.



A. P. Achyuthan

In February 1955, Shri Achyuthan was sent on a tour to the North to propagate and appoint agents in big and small towns where the journal was not sold. He started his visit from Deolali and reached Varanasi after

32 days, visiting Nasik, Manmad, Aurangabad, Nizamabad, Hyderabad, Warangal, Wardha, Nagpur, Tarsi, Jabalpur, Allahabad and returned to Mumbai from



Inauguration of Vedic Sammelan (1994)
L-R Shri A. P. Achyuthan, Shri S. Ramakrishnan,
Shri Arjun Singh

Varanasi. The response was very good and the late Shri Ramakrishnanji, who had an apprehension about his going to the North as his knowledge of Hindi was practically *nil*, congratulated him when he returned.

After his stint in the Circulation Department as Joint Circulation Manager, he was shifted to the Samskritik Vikas Yatra Department as Tour Manager in 1964. Even though he worked in various capacities in many departments and different Bhavan's Kendras such

as Kochi and Hyderabad as Registrar and later the Hyderabad Kendra Director, till his retirement in 1996, he felt that *Bhavan's Journal* Department was his department and the *Bhavan's Journal* was his child. During his ten years tenure in *Bhavan's Journal* Department, he had travelled all

over India in connection with circulation of *Bhavan's Journal*, *Navneet (Hindi)* and *Navneet Samarpan (Gujarati)* and the *Bhavan's Book University Series* Publications. Perhaps, that may be one of the reasons for his transfer from *Bhavan's Journal* to Samskritik Vikas Yatra Department. He continued his active association with the Bhavan till his last breath.

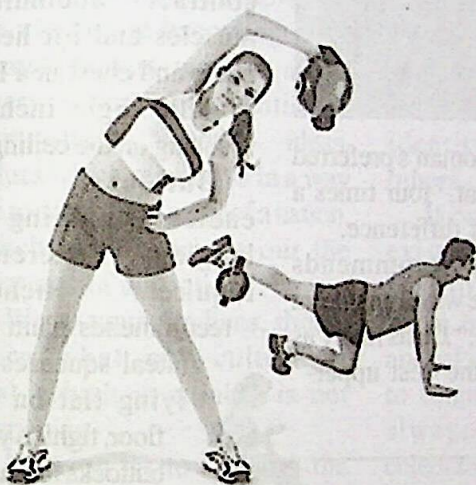
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan worldwide offers condolences to members of the bereaved family. May Shri Achyuthan's soul rest in Eternal Peace.



chetana

HEALTH

Fitness With a New Focus



AGE may be a state of mind, but when it comes to the state of our bodies, there's no escaping reality: namely, the effects of gravity, childbearing, and a slowing metabolism.

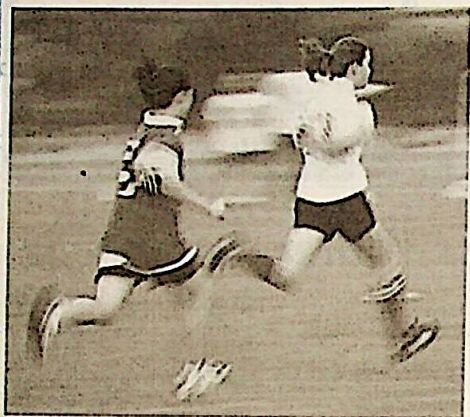
Our biggest weapon: exercise. Experts are now stressing the

importance of strength training.

"Working with light weights — even just the resistance of your own body weight — is one of the most important things you can do as you age," says Margaret Richard, host of PBS-TV's *Body Electric*, a fitness series for women 35 to 60.

"Bone density is directly improved by resistance exercise. If you reduce body fat with cardiovascular exercise, working the muscles underneath will give your skin something to hang on to."

Experts say that doing a few simple strength exercises for only 10 minutes a day, coupled with 20 minutes of activity such as



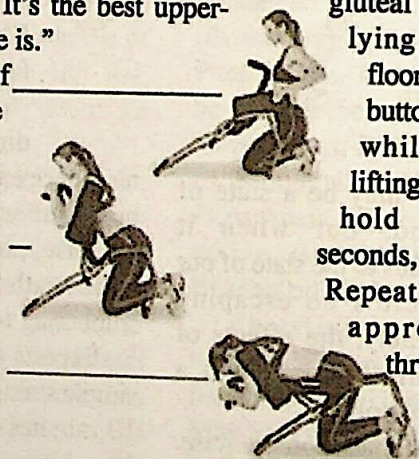
Abdominals
Crunches need to be done for just the length of a song on the radio (about three and a half minutes) to see improvement. With hands supporting the back of your head, contract abdominal muscles and lift head, neck, and chest in a line roughly eight inches, focusing on the ceiling.

Buttocks: No endless squatting or lunging exercises required. Richard recommends plain old gluteal squeezes — lying flat on the floor, tighten your buttocks like a fist while slightly lifting off the floor, hold for five seconds, then release. Repeat for approximately three and a half minutes.

bike riding, one of a fit woman's preferred ways to work up a sweat, four times a week makes a world of difference.

Arms: An expert recommends modified push-ups, done with knees bent and touching the ground: "Do as many as you can properly. It's the best upper-body workout there is."

For the back of _____
your arms, place hands behind you, palms down, on the front edge of a sturdy chair. With — ankles in front of knees, "dip" hips until arms bend at a right angle, then straighten. Try to do 10 repetitions.



Should we always follow the west or should we stick to our own culture and traditions?

WE can be proud along with China that we have the oldest and the best culture and traditions. The issue is how well we use this in becoming good human beings matters a lot. Every culture and tradition is formulated with certain ideas, values which represents in a way the solidarity and unity of a nation, which in turn brings out the greatness of the nation.

We, as young Indians, should learn what our culture is first, which invariably is not happening.

Later on try to "fusion" the good ideas and values with the west and the east. If not possible to do this, then, as individuals we have to try our best in being a good human being with belief and trust in the Almighty.

- **Rajshekar**

It is natural that due to globalisation people of different cultures and civilisations are

coming close to each other. We share our views and knowledge. We get interest in other's celebrations and traditions.

But the note of caution is sounded when unknowingly we leave behind our own cultural identity and start to follow others.

If our own identity will not exist no body can accept us. Due to cultural imperialism value of one culture vanishes and of dominant culture starts to reign. Hence, we should not always follow the west in celebration, food or fashion.

We should rather endeavour to accept and understand the values perpetuated by our own traditions; which is always capable in giving everything—outer as well as inner peace and joy.

- **Swami Amritlokananda**
Ram Krishan Mission
Ashram, R.K.Nagar, Kanpur

Every country has a unique culture and tradition of its own. Indian culture is based on sanatana dharma. It is our duty to see that our youngsters are made aware of our glorious tradition and to assimilate them in their day-to-day life.

Earlier we used to say, 'East is east and the west is west, never the twain shall meet'. But today we speak of the earth as a global village. Hence if the west has any good qualities let us welcome them. Care should be taken that we are firmly rooted in our culture

and tradition. It is not good to ape the west in each and everything.

Take, for example, the celebration of birthdays. Instead of enjoying in a posh hotel blowing lit candles and cutting a cake, we can have a family get-together and visit the temple. We can help the less privileged brethren.

A well knit family bond and good neighbourhood relationship are the basic ingredients of our culture.

*A K Bhagyalakshmi,
Mysore.*

OPENHOUSE-18

We, Indians, have a habit of spitting everywhere, using any place as a toilet, and throwing waste material anywhere and everywhere.

How can we improve the habits of our countrymen and make our cities clean and neat?

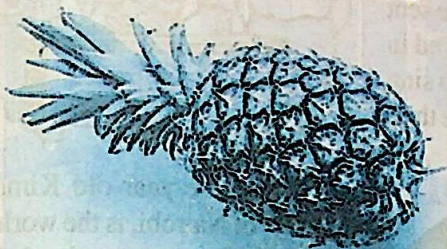
Please send your views neatly typed or handwritten in about a hundred words to: Open House-18,

Chetana, Bhavan's Journal,
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, K. M. Munshi Marg,
Chowpatty, Mumbai—400 007.

E-mail: brbhavan@bom7.vsnl.net.in

All readers are welcome to express their views.

Pineapple (Ananas)



improve digestion.

Acidity: Pineapple fruit with pepper and sugar is useful in acidity.

Latin Name: Ananas
comosus

Sanskrit: Bahunetra

Hindi: Ananas

Marathi: Ananas

THE pineapple fruit is like the jackfruit-the unripe fruit is green in color and while it ripens it becomes yellowish in colour.

It is available in Europe, America and India.

In India it is mostly available in the south, konkan and West Bengal.

It is tasty, sweet and cool.

Usage in common diseases:

Sunstroke: Juice of ripe fruit is beneficial in sunstroke.

Indigestion: Pineapple fruits with pepper and rock salt

Intestinal disorders: Ripe pineapple fruit after meal is good for the intestine.

Polyuria: Pepper powder with pineapple fruit is effective in polyuria

Worms: Pineapple eaten after meals act as wormicidal

Fever: Pineapple juice with honey is beneficial in weakness in fever.

It is cool hence it is favourable during the summer.

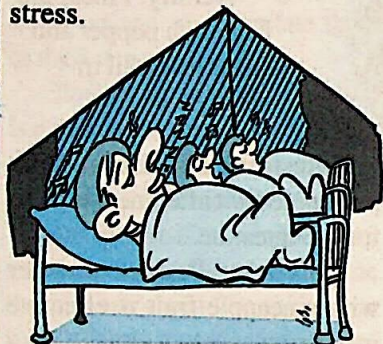
It is also useful in *pitta (bile)* related diseases as well as heat stroke.

It is good for the heart and beneficial in excessive thirst and general debility.

-Vaidya Suresh Chaturvedi

TRIVIA

TEN pillows with inbuilt speakers which warble birdsong were sent to the Danish troops deployed in Iraq. The pillow is meant to sing the soldiers to sleep and ease their stress.



EIGHTY-five-year-old Kimani Maruge of Nairobi, is the world's oldest person to go to school. He enrolled himself in Kapkenduywa Primary School last year and is currently in Std.II. He attends class with two of his grandchildren. The other 28 are in higher classes.

TRUE STORY

Determination to overcome death

FORTY year old Shantabai Patil had severe headaches and was diagnosed as having multiple lesions in her brain which could be due to infection, tuberculosis or some unidentified illness. The doctors gave her a short time to live if the lesions were not cured. As she was undergoing a CT scan of her brain, she recalled her childhood, her married life and motherhood and lived her life all over again. She saw the happy days, the sad days and the satisfactory and the unhappy ones. Suddenly, she felt that if she died, her two small children would suffer miserably, her executive husband would feel lost, unhappy and sad. And she made up her mind to live. 'I cant afford to die at this time, I must live,' she thought and took anti TB and broad spectrum drugs on the advice of her physician which made her physically sick. But cured her. Within two months she was normal. It is now 16 years and she is still alive.



Nandana

STORY

THE WICKED AXE

A woodcutter was passing through a village, when he came upon a strange scene. A group of men were tearing up logs of wood with their bare hands.

Struck with amazement, the woodcutter asked, "Why aren't

you using an axe to chop up the wood?"

"What is an axe?" replied the villagers wonderingly.

Then the woodcutter took out his axe and showed them how he could chop the wood into equal pieces in no time at all.



The excited men bought the axe at once from the woodcutter for a hundred pieces of gold. They rushed to their headman to display their prize.

The headman picked up the axe and started chopping up wood as the men instructed him. But in his eagerness, he let it slip from his hand. It fell on his leg, cutting it badly.

"Aaah! Oww!" he yelled in pain. "I thought this axe was a friend but it has bitten me like a fierce animal!"

At once the villagers decided that the axe was a dangerous thing.

"We must get rid of it," they murmured. "Let's burn it up."

But when the axe was thrown into the flames it began to glow red. The horrified villagers believed it was angry.

"We'd better lock it up in my barn," said the headman. "Then it won't do any harm."

But when the red-hot axe was put inside the barn and locked up, it set fire to the dry hay stored inside. The whole place was reduced to a cinder in seconds.

"Ahh! The wicked thing will not leave us in peace!" cried the headman in a fury. "Go find that wood cutter! He can take back his axe."

Fortunately, the owner of the axe had not gone far. He was amused to hear the villagers' story.

He agreed to relieve them of the axe, and went on his way, thanking his lucky stars. For he'd not only got his axe back, but a hundred gold coins as well!

SWEET THOUGHT

Sri Krishna Sweets

PRODUCERS OF PURE GHEE SWEETS

AMONG HORSES, KNOW ME TO BE
UCCAIHSRAVA BEGOTTEN OF THE
CHURNING OF THE OCEAN ALONG
WITH NECTAR; OF LORDLY
ELEPHANTS AIRAVATA; AMONG
MEN, THE KING.

- Bhagavad Gita

BONDING FOR LIFE

IN Kutch, in western Gujarat, the sarus crane is so revered that there is a local radio programme put up by village women, in which the *sutradhaar* or narrator is Kunjal, a sarus crane!

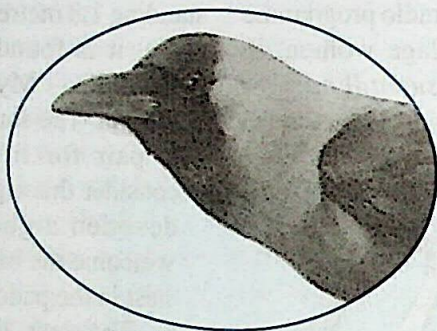


The sarus crane is the world's tallest flying bird, with the male standing 1.8 metres tall. Besides India, it is found in Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and Australia. The sarus is believed to pair for life, so people consider this sign of conjugal devotion a good omen and welcome the birds when they nest in the paddy fields.

The sarus, like other crane species, performs a spectacular courtship dance. The male and female circle around each other with wings spread out, bowing and leaping high into the air. Both fiercely guard the nest when the one or two eggs are laid.

Today, only around 10,000 Indian sarus cranes remain, because despite protection, its habitat has shrunk. The use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers is also killing off its prey.

THE CROW WITH A BROKEN BEAK



ANAND and his friends were tired of playing marbles, ball games and others. The summer holidays were long and hot and they were getting bored. They wanted some excitement and thrill.

'Let's catch some birds' said Anand, the leader of the group of six.

They started throwing stones at the flying birds and tried to catch them. One by one they threw stones but the birds just flew away. Finally after about an hour, Anand's stone hit a flying crow. With a loud and

painful 'caw' it fell down on the ground, unconscious.

There was blood coming out of its stomach. The boys were trying to pick it up when Ravi came and shouted at them for hurting a poor bird. Fighting with all of them and winning, he took the bird home. Ravi's mother loved animals and birds. She carefully wiped and washed the wound, put some medicine and dressing on it and then revived the bird with some water.

She put it in a cage, fed it everyday till the bird's wound healed. And then she noticed that

its beak was slightly broken. A chip had broken off, probably during its fall.

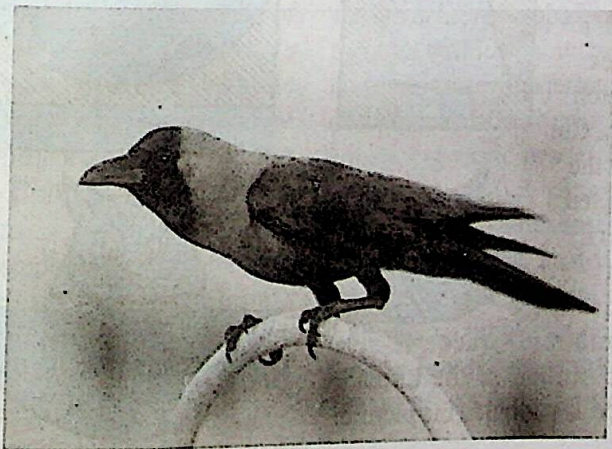
She let it back in the air once it was allright.

The next day she was surprised when a loud 'caw' on her window sill made her look up. There sat the crow with the broken beak. It looked at her and said 'caw' again as if thanking her. That day Ravi got a surprise prize from his teacher for answering a question which no one in his class could answer.

From that day onwards it would come often, once in three or four days or even once a week to eat whatever tidbits they

gave and if they forgot, its loud 'caw' would make them come running to the window sill. The crow kept coming for many months and Ravi could feel that it was blessing him since every time it came something nice and good would happen, like he would get a prize in a debate, or he would get a surprise gift from a relative, or some nice letter would come by post, or his teacher would praise him.

'If you do a good deed you are sure to benefit in some way or the other,' his mother said, 'a good deed never goes waste. You helped the crow and it brought you luck.'



DO IT YOURSELF

PUSS-IN-BOAT

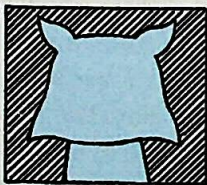
Things needed :

A rectangular piece of thin cardboard measuring 10 cm x 6 cm; a square of thin cardboard measuring 7 cm x 7 cm; compass; pencil; black sketch pen; scissors and glue.

Method :

1. On the cardboard rectangle draw a semicircle with a diameter of 9 cm, as also the rectangular strip measuring 9 cm x 1 cm.

Draw the paws with a black sketch pen. Cut out the shaded parts.

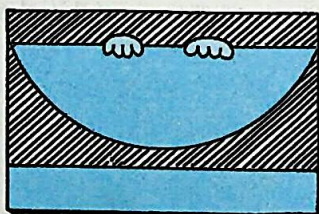


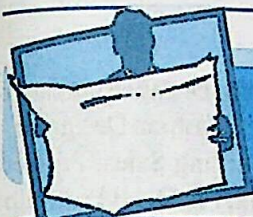
2. On the square cardboard, trace the outline of the kitten's face as shown in the picture.



Cut out the shaded portion.

3. Paste the kitten's face on the semicircle, just above the paws. Sketch in the face and ears of the kitten as in the illustration, with a black sketch pen.
4. Now gently pull up the edges of the rectangular strip so that it forms a boat like shape. Stick the kitten firmly on this strip
5. If you touch the boat gently, it will bob up and down!





Bhavan's News

Mumbai Head Quarters

Homage to Kulapati Munshi

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan paid homage to its founder, Kulapati Dr. K. M. Munshiji, on his 35th Punyatithi (death anniversary) on Wednesday, 8th February 2006. Prof. P. G. Shukla, Shri G. B. Jani and students of Bhavan's Mumbadevi



Adarsh Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya performed the *parayana* of the 12th and 15th chapters of Bhagvadgita and Vishnu-sahasranama.

Shri Girishbhai Munshi, Kulapati Munshiji's son, his family-members and the staff-members of the Bhavan attended this programme and offered their tributes to Kulapatiiji.

Jaipur Kendra

Off to UK

Nine students of Class XI of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Vidyashram, Jaipur, have gone on a ten-day student exchange programme associated with the British Council to the United Kingdom.

The students accompanied by the School Vice-Principal, Priyadarshini Kachchawaha and ISA Coordinator, Shubhara Mukherjee have gone to

Polesworth High School, Warwickshire in the United Kingdom on a project aimed at making them global citizens through various communication channels and for fostering a spirit of universal brotherhood and enhancing world peace.

The students' programme includes the establishment of a cultural link by holding an exhibition on Rajasthani culture with special emphasis on Jaipur besides presenting websites on Indian culture, traditions, etc.

Navi Mumbai Kendra

Courses and workshops

Even as the Bhavan's ambitious Kendra at Mumbai's satellite self-contained metro city of Navi Mumbai is underway near Vashi Railway Station, it has taken over the centrally located Ashoka Mehta Institute at Vashi on November 4 last for carrying out its activities immediately.

The Bhavan has planned full and part time courses from this Kendra located at the Apna Bazar Building in Sector 17 of Vashi and these courses include:

Network Engineering, Retail and Pharma Sales, Fashion Designing, KPO, Accounting Sales, Project Management, Financial Portfolio Analysis and Pharma Product Management (All full-time); Linux/Java Networking, Journalism and Leadership for undergraduates (Part-time).

The Kendra also plans short-term courses in Sanskrit, English, German, French, Russian and Japanese. It has also planned a two-day workshop in Improving Presentation Skills aimed at middle-level managers, and short-period workshops for children and on Brain Yoga.

Kannur Kendra

Annual Day Celebrations 2006

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kannur Kendra, celebrated its XXth Annual Day on 20th January, 2006. The Pro-Vice Chancellor of Kannur University, Prof. P. Kunhikrishnan was the Chief Guest. The School Chairman,



Shri P. P. Lakshmanan presided over the function. The Hon. Secretary, Shri K.E.S. Nambiar and the Managing Committee Member, Shri Shankaran Nambiar were present. The Principal, Mrs. Vasanthi Bharathan presented the Annual Report. The meeting was followed by an entertainment programme performed by the students.



Entertainment programme performed by the students.

Seminars At Bhavan's Kannur Kendra

An inspiring talk on the importance of moral values in the youth of today was delivered by Sr. Teresa Palackal, Director of Hridayaram, Kannur at Bhavan's Kannur for the students of std XI and IX.

The students of std XI attended a seminar on career guidance, waste to wealth and Health Awareness,

communal Harmony organised by the Lions Club of Kannur.

The students of X and XII attended a seminar on "How to overcome examination fear". The talk was delivered by Mr. Bhaskara Podtival, noted counsellor.



Sruti Dinesh

Sruti Dinesh of Class X secured the first place in the All Kerala Bhavans scholarship examination held in January 2006.

Following were the distinction holders.

1.	Ankita S. Pai	..	Class VII
2.	Vishal Vishwanath	..	Class V
3.	Akshay Ratnawas	..	Class IV
4.	Sharath Lal	..	Class VI
5.	Rahul R	..	Class VI
6.	Tosin C	..	Class VI

The students also put up a commendable performance in the various competitions organised by Sree Narayana Vidya Mandir, Kannur as a part of their Silver Jubilee Celebrations.

The following students were the winners in the various items.

1.	Shaheer Aboobaker	X	Poem composing 1 st
2.	Anusree Ajith	IV	Essay Writing (English) 2 nd
3.	Abhilash Mathew	VI	Essay Writing (English) 1 st
4.	Sruthi Dinesh	X	Essay Writing (English) 2 nd
5.	Sithara Vinod	XI	Essay Writing (English) 2 nd
6.	Ziliya K. P.	XI	Essay Writing (English) 2 nd
7.	Sruthi Sasidharan	VIII	Malayalam 2 nd
8.	Ankitha S. Pai	VII	Elocution (English) 1 st
9.	Prasuin P.	XI	Elocution (English) 3 rd
10.	Anusree Ajith	IV	Daivaslokam Parayanam 1 st
11.	Pradeesh P.	VII	Daivaslokam Parayanam 1 st
12.	Arun T. V.	VIII	Daivaslokam Parayanam 3 rd

Nadiad Kendra

Shining lights

Fifteen students of the Bhavan's Shrimati M. K. Patel School, Nadiad, Gujarat, bagged various prizes and encomiums to the School at UCMAS (Universal Concepts of Mental Arithmetic

System) held in Chennai and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on October 1st and November 26th 2005 respectively.

UCMAS is a brain developing programme for students' concentration, visualisation, writing speed, time management, listening ability and maths.

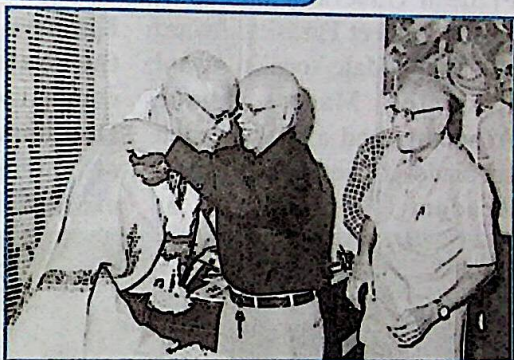
At the national level competition held in Chennai on October 1, 2005, 11035 students from 21 States took part and while Master Ashutosh S. Chinchole of the Nadiad School bagged the second runner up

position, its nine other students won consolation prizes. At Kuala Lumpur, the school's Master Ashutosh S. Chinchole was the 3rd runner up while four others came fourth runners up in three different categories.

Mangalore Kendra

Kaveriappa felicitated

H o n o r a r y
Secretary Prof. K. M.
Kaveriappa and the
C h a i r m a n ,
Department of
Applied Botany in the
Mangalore University
and also its Registrar
has been appointed as
the Vice-Chancellor
of Mangalore
University.



Chairman Prof. B. M. Hegde garlanding
Prof. Kaveriappa when he was felicitated by the
faculty and the Executive Committee
Members of the Kendra.

Tripura Kendra

Effective teachers

Professor G. V.
Subramanian, Joint Director,
interacting with the students
of the Bhavan's Tripura



College of Teacher Education,
Agartala, recently urged them the
need for observing the
norms and discipline
enunciated by the
Bhavan for becoming
effective teachers.

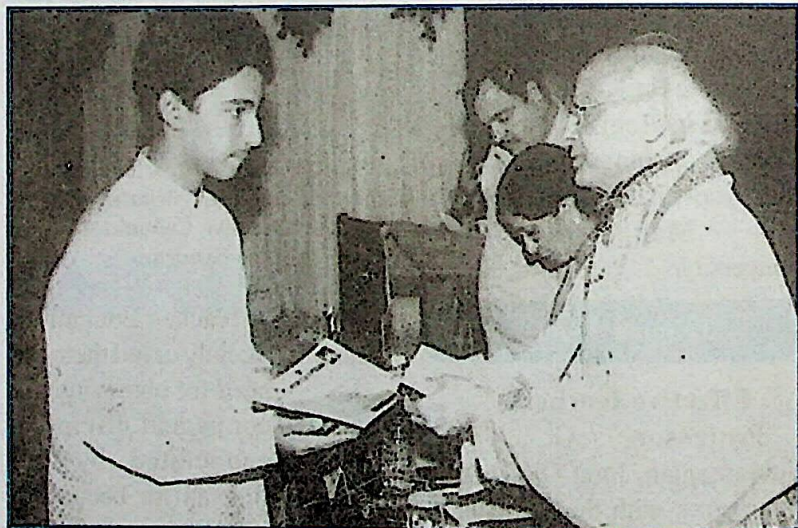
Hyderabad Kendra

Budding Musician

Bhavan's Hyderabad Kendra's budding musician, Tejaswy Mallela, who bagged the CCRT scholarship of the Union Government, the Gifted Child Award of the Andhra Pradesh Government, Pandit Jasraj Sangeet Puraskar Award and Young Male Vocalist Award from the Madras Music Academy, had also won rich accolades at the Madras Music Academy and at

Shanmukhananda Hall, Mumbai, for his performances.

Tejaswy Mallela who has been learning Carnatic music and violin since the age of seven had also won the Tirupati Tirumala Devasthanam's gold medal for three consecutive years for his melodious rendering of Annamacharya Kirtanas. He stood second at the National-Level music competition conducted by the Doordarshan. He is also an ardent numismatist besides excelling in tennis and football.



Pandit Jasraj presenting award to Tejaswy Mallela

Kolkata Kendra

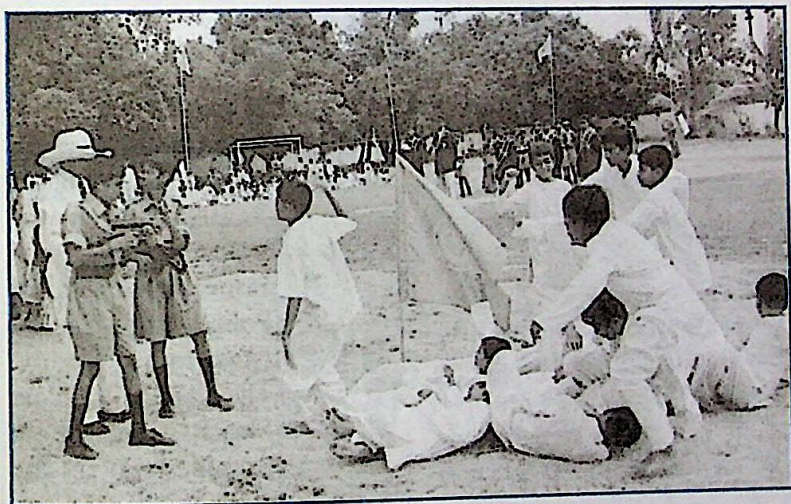
Karate Tournament

The Bhavan's Kolkata Kendra had, for the first time, conducted the two-day Eleventh All-India Kamgata Cup Karate Tournament on January 17-18 at Yuba Bharati Krirangan and the Kendra Director, Shri K. V. Gopalakrishnan inaugurated the tournament in the absence of the West Bengal Transport and

Sports Minister, Shri Subash Chakraborty, who could not attend owing to other preoccupations.

Shri Gopalakrishnan commended the need for learning Karate as it was not only useful for physical fitness but also for self-defence. Besides participants from West Bengal, those from Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat also took part in the tournament.

Bhimavaram Kendra



The power of the Bullets of General Dyre, could not affect the spirit of the Indian Mass.



A victorious Gandhi, whose strength laid in non-violence and self-discipline, became Mahatma of the world. He gives a stunning pose with the Tricolours flying high.



Tadepalligudem Kendra

20th Annual Sports Day Celebrated

The Bhavan's Tadepalligudem Kendra celebrated the 20th Annual Sports Day on January 7, 2006, which was inaugurated by Deputy Inspector General of Police, Eluru, Shri K. Narasimha Reddy. The Kendra President Shri Ranganath Raju presided over the function.



"Pyramids display" by students on the occasion.

Coimbatore Kendra

Dr. Vanavarayar gets 'Vivekananda National Award for Excellence'

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya Coimbatore, recognised Bhavan's Coimbatore Kendra Chairman Dr. B. K. Krishnaraj Vanavarayar, with 'Vivekananda National Award for Excellence' on the occasion of their Platinum Jubilee Celebrations on 4-2-2006. He was awarded in recognition of his valuable



Dr. B. K. Krishnaraj
Vanavarayar

contribution in the field of spreading the ideas of Indian Values and Education in society as also in industrial enterprise.

Dr. Vanavarayar dedicates this recognition to the Bhavan which he feels, has to a great extent influenced him and his activities to qualify for this Award.

Secunderabad Kendra

I-T Block Extended

General K. V. Krishna Rao, PVSM, former Chief of the Army Staff and Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura, inaugurated the extension of the "Information Technology Block" of the Bhavan's Vivekananda College, Sainikpuri on January 21, 2006

and appreciated the college management's efforts to improve the infrastructure.

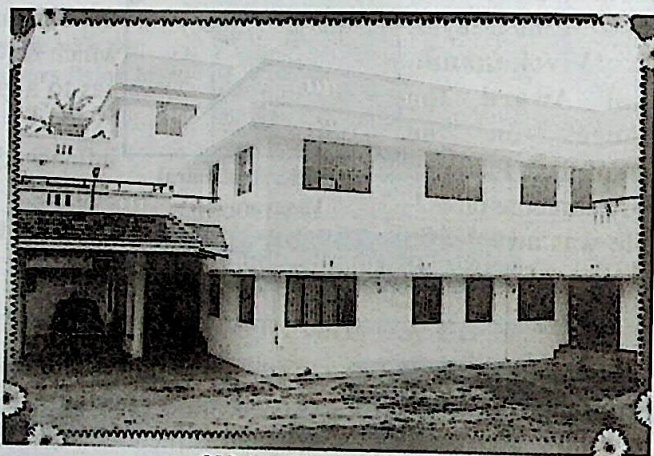
Sainikpuri Kendra Chairman, Justice (Retired) Y. Bhaskar Rao distributed prizes at the 12th annual day function of the college which bagged many laurels including 100% pass in M.Sc. Computer Science, M.Sc. Bio-Chemistry and M.B.A. during the academic year 2004-2005.

Palghat Old Age Home Extension

Viswalakshmy Memorial Charitable Trust's Extension to its Old Age Home, Viswaanandam Vishranti Mandiram, Tattamangalam, Palghat, was opened by Chinmaya Vidyalyaya's Principal, Shrimati Mangala

Shankar on December 28, 2005.

With this addition of five more rooms, the Mandiram can now accommodate 26 inmates in the 13 rooms besides having a Community Hall-Cum-Reading Room and Library, a Lecture Hall and Guest house.



Old Age Home Extension

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**"The fountain of all knowledge is
in every one of us."**

- Swami Vivekananda

We, at Madras Cements, would like to salute this
man, whose ideas have inspired a
whole generation.



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